



Country-level policy engagement in IFAD

Guide book



Investing in rural people

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AAR	After Action Review
AIIM	Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix
BAC	business advisory centre
BDS	business development service
CALIP	Climate Adaptation and Livelihood Protection
CCRIP	Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project
CLAEH	Latin American Centre for Human Economy
CLPE	country-level policy engagement
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
CPE	country programme evaluation
CPM	country programme manager
CPMT	country programme management team
CPO	country programme officer
ICO	IFAD country office
IMI	Innovation Mainstreaming Initiative
INJUVE	National Youth Institute
LBA	licensed buying agent
LGED	local government engineering department
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MERCOSUR	Common Market of the South
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PKSF	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation
PMU	project management unit
PTA	Policy and Technical Advisory Division
RAFIP	Rural and Agricultural Finance Programme



Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

Policies affect every dimension of the institutional and legal context in which poor people pursue their livelihoods, and enabling policies are essential for providing the conditions to encourage inclusive and sustainable rural transformation. Because the policy framework can have such a dramatic impact – positive or negative – on the opportunities and livelihoods of rural people, it is critical that IFAD engage in relevant country-level policy processes.

In reality, this is already happening. A review published in 2016 of country-level policy engagement (CLPE) across IFAD's five regions shows that much is being done in the area of policy engagement, and that there has been a gradual improvement in the extent to which country programmes are engaged in policy (see Box 1). These encouraging figures reflect a broad understanding of the important and potentially transformative impacts of engaging with government policy, and also provide a sense that IFAD's approach can be further



Box 1

Extent of policy engagement experience to date

A review of CLPE across IFAD's five regions published in 2016 found that, increasingly, policy engagement is explicitly incorporated into IFAD projects and grants, and is of growing importance to all country strategies (COSOPs). Although overall less than 30 per cent of COSOPs make policy engagement an explicit priority for their strategies, almost all (93 per cent) give at least some indication of how policy engagement will be undertaken. Newer COSOPs are generally better at incorporating explicit strategies for policy engagement (for example, all four COSOPs approved in 2015 did so), which augurs well for the requirement under IFAD10 that 100 per cent of COSOPs define a specific approach for country-level policy engagement appropriate to IFAD's programme in each country.

The review also found that the investment project portfolio also reflects an increasing focus on policy engagement as a means to achieving project ends. Half of project design reports for IFAD-financed investment projects propose activities related to policy, and almost one third include policy-related activities as stand-alone project components or subcomponents (in 2015, more than 40 per cent of projects had policy components or subcomponents). ESA leads the way with over half of its projects including a policy-related component or subcomponent, while in all other regions between one quarter and one third of the projects include such a component/subcomponent.

Finally, while grants represent a much smaller percentage of IFAD's business than investment projects, in some regions grants are an important vehicle for policy engagement. In particular, in NEN between 40 per cent and 50 per cent of the large grants are focused on policy; nearly half of LAC's grants have a policy focus; while overall approximately 25 per cent of grants have a policy focus.

See www.ifad.org/documents/10180/db8284b8-6249-44d8-98f4-e04adc3433d5.

strengthened by being more specific about the prioritization of policy engagement and the articulation of clear strategies for engagement, linked to the creation of an evidence base and knowledge management strategies more generally.

The review also found that there is wide variation in the extent to which policy engagement is pursued in different country programmes, and thus a key challenge is to create a consistent and effective approach to country-level policy engagement across the five regional divisions of IFAD. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is much good practice already going on, and this guide book looks in large part to build on what is already being done.

The guide book seeks to help country and project teams better understand IFAD's approach to policy engagement, and to help them structure policy engagement effectively into their work and manage activities related to policy engagement. Background information about the policymaking process and the politics of policymaking is included, though a thorough examination of national policy processes is outside the scope of this guide book.

It is structured as follows. This chapter outlines the purpose of the guide book, what it aims to do and who the audience is. It then presents some of the basic concepts, such as country-level policy and country-level policy engagement, and the different meanings of policy change.

Chapter 2 describes the range of activities that IFAD considers as being part of its country-level policy engagement, and explains how the Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA) policy desk, other PTA technical experts, the Environment and Climate Division technical experts, and the Strategy and Knowledge Department can support the work of country programme managers (CPMs), IFAD country offices (ICOs) and the regional divisions more broadly. It then identifies the primary ways in which IFAD engages in country-level policy, and shows how these activities are related to various parts of the policy cycle; it also offers real-life examples of each of the nine types of activities identified. Chapter 3 provides more specific guidance for undertaking these activities in the context of defining the country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP), while Chapter 4 looks at the objective of identifying, prioritizing and operationalizing policy engagement as part of the project design process. In both cases, there are additional explicit links to illustrative case studies. Chapter 5, while linked to the previous sections, provides more in-depth information about various tools and outlines an approach to monitoring and evaluation. Finally, there are a series of appendices – including case studies, terms of reference and in-depth descriptions of workshop tools useful during the design and implementation of CLPE activities – that seek to provide practical examples and “cut and paste” solutions for those planning policy-related activities.

Purpose of the guide book

IFAD's approach to country programming assumes projects are neither an end in themselves nor the sum of what IFAD does in its member countries. Increasingly, policy engagement is considered to be one of the key instruments of its country programmes and a critical complement to the projects for achieving the strategic objectives of the COSOP. Yet, while it is often thought of as a non-lending tool, policy objectives and activities are also increasingly being mainstreamed into loan projects, enabling a significant portion of IFAD loans to directly address policy conditions during the course of their implementation.

The aim of this guide book is therefore to offer ideas, guidance and tools for more effective policy engagement in the context of IFAD country programmes. It recognizes that there are many IFAD-supported projects and country programmes in which policy engagement has already been incorporated and successful results obtained, and it draws on these experiences. It also recognizes that the country contexts within which IFAD's country programmes are

designed and implemented vary profoundly, and therefore so must IFAD's approach if it is to respond effectively to local context and opportunities. The guide book thus seeks to present some ideas that can be applied across sectors, circumstances and settings when thinking about how a COSOP or project might engage with policy. At the same time, this guide book is also intended to demystify policy engagement for those who find the topic far from their traditional modes of work, or who feel overwhelmed by the many topics they are being asked to mainstream into their already complex work. It does not look to invent new hoops to jump through or new sorts of activities. Instead, it offers guidance on how to address policy-related issues more effectively within the context of what IFAD already does.

The guide book takes as its starting point IFAD's already-existing operating model, and it provides concrete suggestions about how to conceptualize, design, implement and successfully monitor and evaluate policy strategies, and components, within the context of COSOPs and IFAD-supported investment projects. It also identifies and describes a series of simple tools that can be used at different points in these processes. The guide book is structured around these different steps and diverse responsibilities.

In this guide book, we are interested in country-level policy engagement as the processes that contribute to the policy cycle rather than to specific thematic policy issues, even if it is evident that the process is frequently determined by the issue; in Appendix 5 there are descriptions of some of the policy issues that are most likely to be encountered in a range of different thematic areas.

The intended audience for the guide book is principally an internal one – thus, those on the front line of IFAD programme and project design and implementation: CPMs, country programme officers and other ICO staff, as well as project design teams and other staff and consultants. All may find information that is useful for their specific tasks of engaging in country-level policy. It takes a practical approach to policy engagement, and provides relatively less information on conceptualizing the policy process.¹

The guide book draws heavily on practical experience and good practice, principally from IFAD country programmes but also from other agencies. It offers a series of case studies about methods that have been successful in sectors, countries or regions, and examples – for instance, logical frameworks and associated monitoring systems, COSOPs, project designs and terms of reference – that effectively address policy engagement.

More specifically, the guide book provides:

- A theoretical framework for IFAD's approach to policy engagement.
- A categorization and explanation of IFAD's policy-related activities.
- Examples from past/ongoing implementation of IFAD's COSOPs, projects and grants.
- Suggested process for preparing a policy engagement strategy in a COSOP and designing policy activities in a project.
- Suggested methods to support monitoring and evaluation of CLPE activities.
- Workshop tools and an array of outside sources on the topic of policy engagement.

The remainder of this chapter outlines some basic concepts, describes IFAD's evolving approach to CLPE, and highlights some features of its recent experience in CLPE.

1 Two excellent toolkits for understanding concepts related to policy, the broader policy process, and how to engage with it are the RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (or ROMA) by the Overseas Development Institute (www.roma.odi.org) and the Problem Driven Governance and Political Economy Analysis guide by the World Bank (openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/16777).

Basic concepts

What is country-level policy? The term “policy” is not a tightly defined concept, but a highly flexible one, used in different ways on different occasions. The Oxford Dictionary defines it loosely as “a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual”. Webster’s Dictionary has a number of closely related definitions:

- A definite course or method of action selected (by government, institution, group or individual) from among alternatives, and in the light of given conditions to guide and, usually, to determine present and future decisions.
- A specific decision or set of decisions designed to carry out such a course of action.
- Such a specific decision or set of decisions together with the related actions designed to implement them.
- A projected programme consisting of desired objectives and the means to achieve them.

IFAD’s interest in policy refers first and foremost to the *laws* (which may be promulgated through acts); the *regulations* that serve to implement laws; *policies* (in the more specific sense of the word); and *strategies* of sovereign governments. These are principally at the national level, but in a growing number of countries where the government is decentralized, it also includes those at the subnational level (state/province, county or even district); thus, in some countries, the local laws established by municipalities are referred to as *by-laws* because their scope is regulated by the central governments of those nations. Government *programmes* that operationalize these policies, as well as the *budget allocations* that make this possible, are also aspects of policy. These dimensions are closely related to *institutions* – the structures that serve to design, implement and monitor policies and practices. Country-level policies may also have a regional or even global dimension, particularly where derived from, for example, a regional economic community or a global convention.

Many of these dimensions may be relevant to the same set of issues. Take the example of agricultural extension. There may be a national (or subnational) extension policy and/or strategy, a national extension programme, a budgetary allocation for it, and a dedicated institution for agricultural extension. However, there is not always a consistent policy hierarchy on all issues, and thus, for example, there are many programmes implemented that are not guided by a policy framework.

The policy cycle is conceptually simple. Just as we speak of a project cycle, so we can conceive of a policy cycle. Different models of project cycles exist according to how many separate

Figure 1



stages are defined. The simplest version of the model (see Figure 1) starts with agenda setting; proceeds to policy formulation and decision-making; continues with policy implementation; and is completed with monitoring and evaluation of the policy's implementation and impact – which, in turn, feeds into the agenda setting. These steps are described in more detail in Box 2.

An example of a cyclical policy process that conforms well to the model is national budget planning and review processes: in most countries they are predictable, formal, structured and sequential – and they provide IFAD and others with formal and defined opportunities for engagement (see Box 3). On the other hand, many policy processes do not follow the cycle described: the different policy stages are not distinct and separate; they merge into each other and earlier stages may be revisited at later stages in the cycle.

Box 2

Steps in the policy cycle

The cycle starts with **agenda setting**. The policy issue is identified and defined, and potential opportunities and problems, and their implications, are identified, collected and analysed. Before policies are crafted, ideas emerge that can potentially be transformed into policy. Research in social science suggests that ideas are usually generated by “entrepreneurs”, who possess unique evidence or perspectives for their ideas, which they attempt to “sell” to other actors in the policy process. The literature further suggests that these ideas are likely to be picked up and mainstreamed at specific moments, particularly when problems arise to which the existing idea provides an elegant solution. In reality, these ideas come from a variety of actors: in more advanced and middle-income economies, they often come out of independent institutions tasked with considering policy options (like think tanks and not-for-profit organizations), but they also emerge from discussions among stakeholders about what is wrong and what might improve the situation.

The cycle proceeds to **policy formulation and decision-making**. Alternative policy options are identified, and their consequences are assessed. The preferred policy option is chosen by the political decision makers – ideally once the problem and its implications are fully understood. Once formulated, analysis and politics determine how the agenda item is translated into an authoritative decision: it may be through a law, rule or regulation, administrative order, or resolution; and it may be approved by either the legislative or the executive branch of the government.

It continues with **policy implementation**. The approved policy is administered and enforced by an agency of the government, or by lower levels of the government, mandated to implement policy, and financial resources are brought to bear as necessary through the annual budget. The agency will be expected to take instructions as stated in the policy, but will probably be called upon to provide missing pieces and to make judgements as to intent, goals, timetables, programme design and reporting methods. The policy must also be communicated to the staff responsible for implementing the policy, and capacity built at all levels as necessary, so as to ensure that the policy is translated into concrete action. It should also be communicated to the public, and particularly to those expected to be directly affected by the policy change.

Finally, it finishes with **policy monitoring and evaluation**. Ideally, policy implementation progress is monitored, gaps are identified, and the impacts of the policy – intended and unintended – are evaluated. If goals exist, the effectiveness of the policy and its components can be determined. Side effects must also be discovered and reckoned. The output of evaluation may be no change, minor modification, overhaul, or even (but rarely) termination. The feedback provided by evaluation is injected back into the agenda-setting stage – or indeed to any of the other stages, thus closing the loop of the cycle.

Box 3

Budgetary politics and policy processes

While the process by which national budgets are set varies from country to country, all countries have a set of budgetary institutions, which set out “all the rules and regulations according to which budgets are prepared, approved and carried out.” (Alesina and Perotti, 1995)

These budgetary laws are usually both **procedural** – dictating who reviews what, when and how – and often **numerical** – dictating how much gets spent on what type of good. Budgetary institutions and the processes they govern may vary in the extent to which they are **hierarchical**, concentrating power among a particular set of actors (e.g. the finance minister or cabinet), or **pluralistic** (e.g. participatory budgeting processes, in which citizens help determine the allocation of spending).

Rules on **amending** and **voting** for budgets also vary: in some countries, parliaments can change individual allocations; in others, they vote to approve or reject budgets without having the power to change them.

Finally, budget institutions may vary in terms of how **transparent** and **flexible** they are: in some countries, budgets are reviewed frequently to make adjustments to allocations of spending, and can be monitored actively by citizens or outside actors. Indeed, a Department for International Development (DFID) study of the political economy of the budget process in Malawi concluded that in the budget process there was “a theatre that masks real distribution and spending”. The study got behind the façade of the formal budget process to reveal a process dominated by informal practices that reduced transparency and adversely affected the distribution of resources; it recommended that DFID should complement its budget support by seeking to strengthen groups outside of the executive branch in order to promote demands for increased accountability. (*Political Economy Analysis: How To Do Note*. DFID, 2009).

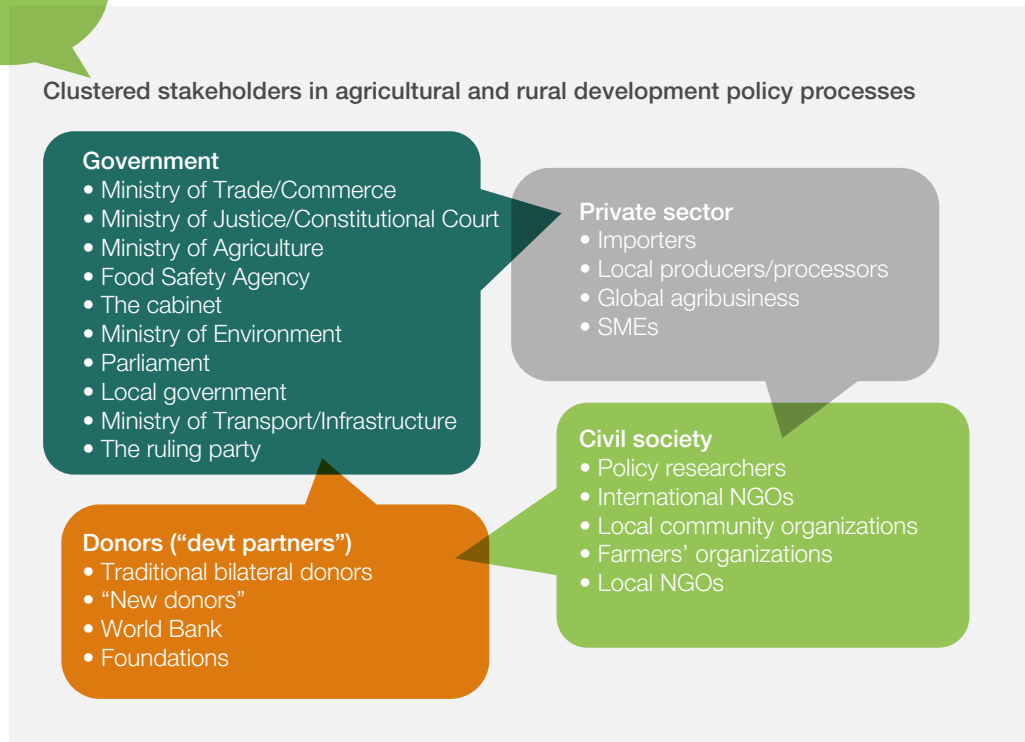
For IFAD country teams, understanding the rules and procedures, as well as the actors, that govern the drafting, approval and monitoring of budgets is important to ensure that projects are accounted for within national budgets, and that counterpart funding from governments, when present, are allocated and approved. The budgetary process creates certain openings for IFAD to engage with government actors to ensure these goals are met.

Clearly, the model is of course highly stylized and simplified, and it has its limitations. Its merits are to provide a conceptual framework for thinking about policy processes, and to remind us that engagement in country-level policy processes can take place at all stages of the project cycle – from identification to monitoring and evaluation – and, as will be shown in Chapter 2, IFAD already does engage at all stages of the cycle.

Yet the reality is often complex. The model also assumes an essentially technocratic, or *rational actor*, approach in which state agents make rational decisions based on weighing up information, costs and benefits, etc. In reality, however, policy processes are often far more complex: because policies have political implications in so far that determine access to scarce resources, the policymaking process is characterized by competing interests and ideas, represented by a multitude of actors and institutions who weigh into the process. This is equally true in democratic and non-democratic states.

Thus, while “government” may lead public policy processes, within governments there are many divergent and contradictory interests (within ministries, among different ministries, and between the different branches of government) and these different interests must be reconciled. Within the private sector, different actors may also have competing interests – take, for example, rice producers and processors versus rice importers, or local companies versus

Figure 2



multinational ones. Civil society may range from policy researchers to international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to producers’ organizations, and each of these actors has different perspectives and interests to pursue. Non-domestic actors may also be involved: in many IFAD member countries, there are global food and agribusiness companies with interests to pursue, and in some the international development community is also involved in policy processes (see Figure 2). For IFAD, a core interest is to increase the extent to which smallholder farmers participate in the process, as well as to facilitate the incorporation of their interests while avoiding a situation in which elites capture the policy processes.

The point is that the processes of agenda setting, formulation and decision-making, and even implementation and monitoring and evaluation, are all ones involving divergent and competing preferences, and the outcomes achieved at each stage reflect a negotiation of the interests and ideas of the different actors, as well as pure “evidence”. And in each country and on each policy issue, the access, influence and sheer power of different actors in the policymaking process vary and need to be understood.

Political economy analysis aims to situate development interventions within an understanding of the prevailing political and economic processes in society – specifically, the ideas, interests and institutions that account for the distribution and contestation of power between different groups and individuals. It can be helpful for understanding what drives the different actors in policy processes, and what this means for the processes themselves, the outcomes, and the “winners” and “losers”.² The political economy analysis, and some tools for conducting it, is detailed in Appendix 6.

² See, for example, J. Joughin. 2014. *The Political Economy of Seed Reform in Uganda: Promoting a Regional Seed Trade Market*. World Bank, Africa Trade Practice Working Paper Series, Number 3. January 2014.



Chapter 2

IFAD and country-level policy engagement

What is country-level policy engagement (CLPE), and why should IFAD do it?

What is country-level policy engagement? Typically, IFAD’s approach to policy engagement is one of *facilitating and informing* nationally owned policy processes, so as to enable governments and other national stakeholders to determine themselves the policy change required. Its approach is characterized by building national capacities for dialogue, and the design, implementation and assessment of policies, and by bringing evidence to those processes where appropriate and useful. It includes, but goes beyond, policy dialogue (see Box 4). It is a process that may have political dimensions, as it can involve social and economic empowerment of groups that have been excluded or marginalized from policy processes.³ IFAD does not impose policy change as a condition for its support for investment projects, and rarely does it seek specific policy change (see Box 5 on the different types of change that IFAD might directly or indirectly seek to influence).

Box 4

What is the difference between policy engagement and policy dialogue?

In the past, the term “policy dialogue” has frequently been used to describe IFAD’s role in country-level policy processes. However, the term dialogue suggests a particular approach: one based on a relationship (often a bilateral one) between IFAD and the national government, focused on a discussion of policies and strategies. While such an approach is not excluded, the wide range of policy-related activities that IFAD either conducts or facilitates is far broader than policy dialogue alone, and for this reason the more generic term “policy engagement” is considered more appropriate.

(This is true in the English language. In Spanish and French, however, the preferred term remains a direct translation of the phrase “public policy dialogue”.)

CLPE can thus be seen as a process for IFAD to collaborate, directly and indirectly, with partner governments and other country-level stakeholders to influence policy priorities or the design, implementation and assessment of formal policies that shape the opportunities for inclusive and sustainable rural transformation.

3 See, for example, L. Phillips. 2016. Policy Engagement and Civil Society: The Case of IFAD. In R. Marchetti, ed. *Partnerships in International Policy-Making: Civil Society and Public Institutions in European and Global Affairs*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Box 5

Types of change in policy engagement

- **Discursive change:** Changes in the words, narratives and concepts used by an organization or group. For example, reference to specific social groups in new policies or widening the definition of a particular group, such as “indigenous peoples”.
- **Procedural change:** Changes in the way things are done by an organization or group, but that do not necessarily constitute a change in a policy or law itself. For example, changing the way that consultations are carried out to make it easier for rural communities to take part.
- **Attitudinal change:** Changes in attitude towards other people or organizations and/or their values and causes. For example, inviting NGOs to contribute to policy debates or helping to develop better relationships between farmers and policymakers.
- **Content change:** Actual changes in the strategy, policy documents or budgets of an individual or group. For example, apportioning a greater percentage of a national budget to agricultural development or to certain areas or the scale up of a pilot into government policy.
- **Behavioural change:** Permanent changes in the way organizations or groups act or behave; changes in formal and informal incentive structures. For example, decentralizing decision-making power from ministry headquarters to district level.

Adapted from H. Jones. 2011. *A Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Policy Influence*.

Embedded within this definition are a number of key ideas:

- *Collaborate... to influence* indicates that IFAD does not directly seek changes to policies (except in the broadest sense to promote pro-smallholder agriculture policies), but rather it works with national stakeholders to enable them to bring about policy change when there is an interest and consensus as to the need to do so.
- *Collaborate directly and indirectly* means that it is both IFAD as an organization that engages in policy processes – generally to inform or facilitate policy dialogue, and also IFAD-supported projects that support the design, implementation and/or monitoring of policies.
- *Governments and other country-level* stakeholders recognize on the one hand, the primacy of governments in country-level policy processes and on the other, the importance of policy processes that offer space: (i) to civil society – above all, the organizations representing smallholder farmers and rural communities, but also including policy research institutions and NGOs with ground-level experience of smallholder agriculture and rural communities; and (ii) on the other organizations representing the interests of private-sector investors in agriculture. Wherever politically possible, IFAD is committed to seeing these stakeholders participate in policy processes, and wherever necessary, supporting rural organizations so that they can participate effectively in them.
- *Policy priorities or the design, implementation and assessment of formal policies* confirm IFAD’s interest in the entire policy cycle. Formal policies include those affecting the sector as a whole (“high level”); and those at a more “micro” level of a technical nature.
- *Policies that shape the opportunities for inclusive and sustainable rural transformation*. For IFAD, the range of policies in which it is interested is determined by its mandate and strategic framework. They thus include policies around smallholder agriculture, climate change

adaptation, gender equality and women's empowerment, rural employment creation and rural finance, etc. These may be *within* the agricultural/rural development sector (e.g. policies on the regulation and access to seeds, or the regulatory framework for water user associations), or at the level of the sector (e.g. national policy for rural development or national agricultural strategy).

What is the rationale for policy engagement? For IFAD, policy engagement serves at least three critical purposes:

- First, it helps to expand development impact. Projects alone cannot eradicate rural poverty or generate rural transformation because, inevitably, they reach a limited number of people. However, projects can be a lever for influencing public policies and national-level programmes, as well as a space to innovate and experiment with new possible policy solutions, and so bringing about systemic change. This requires that projects are flexible and can adjust as experiments are undertaken, and that lessons are fed back to local, national and international actors – and that they are structured to make this a reality. In such cases, policy engagement becomes a way to scale up successful approaches developed under IFAD-supported projects and achieve greater impact by shaping the larger policy framework.
- Second, policy engagement can also serve the more immediate purpose of improving project impact. Project implementation may be constrained by a mismatch between the project objectives and the policy framework or a gap between the policy and its implementation. Addressing policy bottlenecks or barriers can therefore help to create an enabling environment for project implementation, so improving the chances that outcomes are realized and development impacts achieved.
- Third, and finally, policy engagement can help to enhance IFAD's relevance in the growing number of countries where the government looks to it for knowledge, experience and lessons, as well as for its financial resources. This is likely to be the case in a wide range of countries: both those where IFAD is a major development partner for government in the agriculture and rural development sector and has a substantial body of experience in-country to draw on, and those where IFAD's funding represents a relatively small

Box 6

Key features of IFAD's approach to CLPE

- **Partnership** with government: working *with* governments to support *their* policy processes – role as trusted partner.
- **Focus:** on issues of importance to smallholder farmers/rural people and poor rural people; focus on both “high level” and “technical” policies.
- **Representation:** building capacity of rural producer organizations to participate, giving them voice and space.
- **Breadth of engagement:** working across the policy cycle, from identification of policy issues to policy implementation.
- **Integrated approach:** projects and policy engagement rarely separate; closely linked with country programme.
- **Financing mechanisms:** policy activities within projects and outside of them.

percentage of national budgets dedicated to ARD and so must offer a specific value added relative to government's regular expenditure. By contributing to the cycle of policy experimentation (where policies are created, implemented, tested and then changed if not successful, or scaled up if successful), IFAD can add value to the services it offers to its members.

As shown in Box 6, IFAD's approach to CLPE has a number of specific characteristics. Above all, its ability to engage in policy processes is predicated on it being a trusted partner of governments. This it has to achieve first and foremost through the quality of the projects it finances: it is these projects that gives IFAD the credibility to be listened to. It is also a function of IFAD's approach – entering on the one hand as a partner of government rather than to confront it, and on the other as an honest broker of relationship dialogue between governments and other policy actors. Experience suggests that IFAD can usefully and effectively engage in policy processes in most countries (large as well as small, in middle-income countries as well as in low-income countries); and some of IFAD's most important contributions have been in large middle-income countries, showing that clearly “leverage” is not the basis for IFAD's approach.

Having said this, it is recognized that in a limited number of countries where IFAD works, the governments consider the development of policies an internal issue, and they are not interested in a “policy dialogue” with IFAD or any other development partners. Indeed, there are sometimes significant challenges to engaging in-country policy processes; and, in some cases, in doing political economy analysis and in designing and reviewing policy engagement plans, there is a need to work quietly and behind the scenes in an informal fashion to build trust. This could be the case when there are sensitive policy topics (e.g. on issues related to land tenure), or when the government is careful about maintaining its policy independence from international actors.

However, even in the most difficult cases where governments are reluctant to talk to IFAD about policies, those same governments are generally interested in learning from the experience of IFAD-supported projects and keen to adopt in their own strategy or programmes the successes realized; here, IFAD's role is to facilitate learning, adoption and scaling up. Some countries lack the local institutional capacity to effectively implement their policies, and IFAD-supported investments can offer an important vehicle for operationalizing policy at the local level. So

Box 7

What about global policies?

Global or international policies and agreements can also have substantial influence on IFAD member countries. In IFAD, work on influencing the global policy context is led by the Global Engagement, Knowledge and Strategy Division, within the Strategy and Knowledge Department, and it was that division that led efforts to ensure that the 2030 Agenda and associated Sustainable Development Goals adequately addressed the needs of smallholders and the rural poor. Responsibility for engaging in other, more specialized global processes may lie with other units: for example, it is the Environment and Climate Change Division that leads IFAD's engagement in the climate change agreements under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The key point, however, is that this dimension of global policy is not part of IFAD's country programmes, although enabling national governments to design and implement policies derived from international agreements or conventions certainly can be considered a dimension of country-level policy engagement.

even if it is not labelled as policy engagement as such, there are usually opportunities for IFAD to support nationally owned policy processes as long as they are approached with sensitivity.

In addition, it is worth highlighting that IFAD's approach to CLPE sometimes has a regional dimension (an approach that is facilitated with regional grants), or even a global dimension. Examples include supporting experience-sharing and lesson learning among countries within a regional economic community or grouping; encouraging cross-national collaboration on policy issues and solutions of common interest, such as control of animal diseases, regional trade, developing strategies for adaptation to climate change and promoting legislation that recognizes the need for strategies to address the needs of smallholder farmers; and supporting processes to develop national policies derived from decisions made at the level of a regional economic community or a global convention.

What can the Policy and Technical Advisory Division offer?

The Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA) policy desk is intended to provide a focal point for conceptualizing and operationalizing CLPE within IFAD. Its role is, above all, to support the regional divisions in strengthening their focus on CLPE in country programmes and the projects that constitute the key element of them. As requested by country programme managers (CPMs)/regional divisions, it can contribute to defining a policy engagement strategy for the country programme and the design and implementation of policy engagement activities under investment projects, grant-financed projects and as stand-alone exercises; and it can support the more direct policy engagement efforts of the CPM/IFAD country office. Particular tasks it can undertake to support country programmes include:

- Review draft COSOPs and project design reports and suggest ways to bring a stronger policy dimension to the country programme/project through country programme management teams (CPMTs), quality enhancement and ad hoc support.
- Participate in COSOP and project design missions to help develop the policy strategy/component.
- Participate in project implementation support missions (inception and supervision missions, including mid-term reviews), and help identify opportunities for policy engagement under ongoing projects.
- Help draft terms of reference for policy-related missions and activities or project management staff members and identify consultants who may be suitable to work on policy issues (examples are in Appendix 3).
- Help CPMs to identify financing opportunities for policy activities.
- Help CPMs to develop policy-related grant proposals and supervise the activities.
- Play a role in diffusing useful approaches and practice among countries and regions.

From time to time, the PTA policy desk has specific resources available to help CPMs/regional economists finance activities related to policy engagement within country programmes or at the regional level. Those funds usually require CPMs/regional economists to provide some brief outline of the background, rationale and link to a country programme; a description of the key expected outcomes and a description of activities; and an estimate of total cost and financing requirements.

Additionally, the PTA policy desk works in tandem with many other professionals, and can help country teams and consultants seek advice from other internal resources with policy expertise. This includes first and foremost technical advisers in PTA and the Environment and

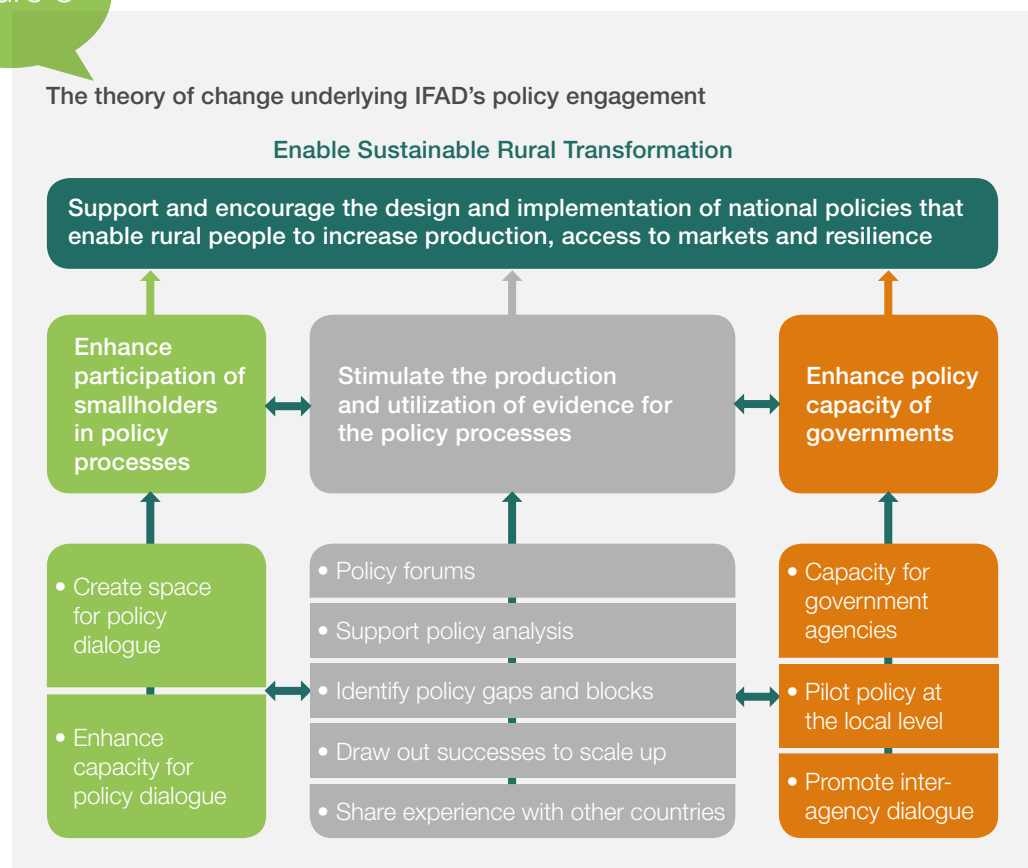
Climate Division, who are subject/sector specialists and who may be able to provide advice about and help to craft more technical elements of policies related to their thematic specialities (e.g. on adaptation to climate change, the registration of rural people's organizations, and laws and regulations related to land tenure). The policy desk can also put teams in touch with other IFAD divisions or departments, who are likely to be able to contribute, for example, the Operational Programming and Effectiveness Unit (OPE) on issues related to monitoring and evaluation, or the Strategy and Knowledge Department (SKD) on evaluating the impact of policies, or on national policy issues that have a clear link to global policy priorities.

IFAD's policy engagement in practice

IFAD's policy engagement has the overall objective of supporting and encouraging national policies that promote inclusive and sustainable rural transformation. This objective is achieved through three outcomes: enhancing the participation of smallholders in policy processes; stimulating the production and utilization of evidence for policy processes; and enhancing the policy capacity of governments. In turn, these outcomes are achieved through a diverse set of policy-related activities that IFAD either supports or, in some cases, conducts itself. The theory of change that underlies IFAD's engagement in policy processes is given in Figure 3.

While most policy-related activities originate from and are implemented within projects or grants, CPMs and in-country officers also undertake activities related to policy engagement outside of these mechanisms. This may take the form of participation in the in-country sector working groups, or in other initiatives that are more opportunistic and ad hoc linked to specific processes that are unlikely to be mentioned explicitly in COSOPs.

Figure 3



Box 8

Description of country-level policy activities currently within IFAD's work

1. **Create space for policy dialogue:** An investment project can be used to create space for policy dialogue between national stakeholders, particularly rural producer organizations (including a range of different organizations representing smallholder farmers), and then supporting that dialogue.
2. **Enhance stakeholder capacity for policy processes:** An investment, or grant-financed, project can be used to enhance the capacity of national stakeholders, particularly rural producer organizations, providing them with the skills and analysis they need to ensure that their leaders are able to participate effectively in national policy processes.
3. **Policy analysis and support for policy formulation:** An investment project, grant project or even IFAD's administrative budget can be used to finance analysis of national policy and/or to provide short-term consultancy support for policy formulation.
4. **Operationalize/pilot national policy at the local level:** An investment project may be used to enable the government to operationalize a national policy at the local level, particularly in states where the central government may have limited policy leverage at the local level; or to pilot new models for implementing national policies.
5. **Review policy implementation to identify gaps, constraints or blockages:** An investment project can provide a vehicle to review relevant current policies, identify implementation gaps and/or policy constraints and blockages, and understand the reasons and bring the evidence to the government.
6. **Draw out successful models and promote adoption/scaling up:** Successful approaches and models piloted or developed under an investment project can be drawn out and analysed to promote their adoption or scaling up by the government under a national strategy or programme. This may be done under the investment project itself, or by the CPM/CPO building on the evidence generated by the project.
7. **IFAD participates in policy dialogue forums:** The CPM/CPO can actively participate as IFAD's representative in the in-country policy dialogue forums (e.g. sector working groups), bringing on-the-ground experience and lessons learned to the government and its other development partners.
8. **Strengthen the capacity of government agencies:** A project can provide a vehicle to strengthen the capacity of relevant government agencies to formulate, implement and assess national policies and programmes.
9. **Share experience at the regional or global level:** A regional or global grant can offer a framework to bring together policy stakeholders from different countries, share experiences among peers, promote peer-to-peer learning, and build trust between stakeholders from the same country.
10. **Promote dialogue between government agencies** for improved and more coherent policymaking and implementation, particularly around cross-cutting issues such as climate change adaptation or nutrition.

The 2016 review of CLPE in practice⁴ revealed that IFAD is undertaking policy engagement in a number of different ways. A total of 10 types of activities have been identified (see Box 8), which span the policy cycle and vary in their underlying objectives. These activities are not mutually exclusive: in many instances, several activities are employed simultaneously or in a complementary fashion. Some activities in fact complement each other: for example,

4 See *Country-level Policy Engagement in IFAD: A Review of Experience*. The document is available at www.ifad.org/documents/10180/db8284b8-6249-44d8-98f4-e04adc3433d5.

creating space for rural people’s organizations to participate in policy dialogue works better when those same actors are strengthened to participate in policy processes (see activities 1 and 2 in Box 8). The activities listed may be financed through investment projects, through grant-financed projects, and/or through the (limited) administrative budget, while some such as IFAD’s participation in the in-country forums for policy dialogue may not (immediately) require specific funding.

As noted above, the activities outlined in Box 8 focus on different parts of the policy cycle, the process of formulating, approving, implementing and evaluating policy outlined in Chapter 1. Often, within a single project or grant, activities are formulated to be executed at different points of the policy cycle; for example, an IFAD project may contribute to a study aimed at helping with the formulation of a policy, enable or train actors to participate more effectively in the dialogue around the approval of a policy, and assist with a pilot implementation scheme of an approved policy.

Additionally, the types of activities outlined above seek to achieve different outcomes. While the objectives of some are to create policy processes in which smallholders and other rural people have a more significant voice in policy processes (activities 1 and 2), the objectives of others are to stimulate the production and utilization of evidence for the policy process (activities 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9). Some, instead, focus on enhancing capacity for policymaking by engaging governments directly in discussions about policy, or in enhancing their capacity to design and implement effective policies (activities 5, 8 and 10). Table 1 situates these activities and provides examples about them.

Table 1: Policy activities, their place in the policy cycle and outcomes sought

Policy activity	Stages of the policy cycle	Outcome sought from activity
Create space for policy dialogue	Cross-cutting: dialogue platforms may help set the policy agenda, be consulted on the formulation of policies, and monitor and evaluate policies during implementation	Enhance participation of smallholders in policy processes and ensure these reflect their interests
Enhance stakeholder capacity for policy processes	Cross-cutting: enhanced capacity of rural people and their organizations to participate in all parts of the policy cycle	Enhance participation of smallholders in policy processes and ensure these reflect their interests
Support policy analysis and formulation	Policy formulation	Stimulate the production and utilization of evidence for the policy process
Review policy implementation to identify gaps, constraints and blockages	Policy implementation/monitoring and evaluation (M&E)	Stimulate the production and utilization of evidence for the policy process
Draw out successful models and promote adoption or scaling up	Policy M&E	Stimulate the production and utilization of evidence for the policy process
Share experience at the regional or global level	Cross-cutting	Stimulate the production and utilization of evidence for the policy process
IFAD participates in policy dialogue forums	Cross-cutting: issues discussed and analysed in such forums span the policymaking cycle	Stimulate the production and utilization of evidence for the policy process
Strengthen the capacity of government agencies	Cross-cutting: could be encouraging better capacity for policy consultation, formulation, implementation or M&E	Enhance policy capacity of government
Operationalize or pilot national policy at the local level	Policy implementation	Enhance policy capacity of government
Promote inter-agency dialogue	Cross-cutting	Enhance policy capacity of government

Examples of CLPE activities and their relationship to objectives

The remainder of this chapter provides more information about the types of CLPE activities, providing examples of how IFAD is working in order to help those reading the guide book to think about how to structure policy engagement in IFAD COSOPs, projects and grants. The activities are organized by the underlying objective.

Outcome 1: Enhance participation of smallholders and other rural people and organizations in policy processes

A large literature in political science and political theory suggests that public policy made through deliberation and discussion has distinct advantages over policy that is not broadly discussed and commented upon.⁵ According to these theorists, deliberation enhances the legitimacy of policy by increasing perceptions of fairness, as well as enhances the stability of policy decisions.

IFAD is interested in promoting the participation of rural people and their organizations in policy processes in order to enhance their voices, which historically have been marginalized in policy processes, and to enhance the quality of public policymaking, in line with the argument above. Discussions among stakeholders about what is wrong and what might improve the situation can help to set the stage for the formulation of better policies. Some examples are multistakeholder platforms that work on specific topics or with specific industries, value chains or products; special units within government tasked at analysing government policy; or groups of international actors interested in policy within a given country and empowered by the government to discuss with them and other national actors, which can be very useful in creating consensus and clarity during the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies.

IFAD contributes to the participation of smallholders in the policy cycle by supporting the process of discussion in at least two ways: creating and convening space for policy dialogue, and enhancing stakeholder capacity to set agendas for, or influence, policy processes. The following paragraphs describe these activities in more detail.

Create space for policy dialogue. IFAD's work with rural people's organizations/farmer organizations often leads projects to support new or expanded ways for IFAD stakeholders to participate in discussions about their livelihoods and products. Many projects, working in different thematic areas, include among their activities the establishment of multistakeholder

Example: The Smallholder Agribusiness Partnership Project in **Sri Lanka** will create space for policy dialogue between national stakeholders and then support that dialogue. At the national level, *4P multistakeholder meetings* will be established, with participation of representatives of relevant government agencies, of producers and their organizations involved in agricultural value chains, of private-sector processors and exporters, and of interested banks and microfinance institutions. These multistakeholder meetings, which the PMU will convene twice per year, will be professionally facilitated. The meetings will serve as an opportunity for the different actors along the project-supported agricultural value chains to interact, and specifically, to identify and bring to the attention of Government critical policy and regulatory issues affecting the sector; to prioritise these and propose research, where needed, to better analyse the issues and identify solutions; and to validate the findings and advocate for policy change.

5 See, for example, J. Elster. 1998. Deliberation and Constitution Making. In J. Elster, ed. *Deliberative Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 97-122; and T. Risse. 2000. Let's Argue: Communicative Action in World Politics. *International Organization*, Vol. 54, No. 1: 1-39.

platforms for discussing production and policy issues, or for engaging particular populations (e.g. rural youth, indigenous peoples) on identification of policy problems and potential solutions. In some cases, where civil society already counts, and spaces for discussing policy areas of interest to rural people's organizations already exist, then IFAD supports or strengthens these rather than creating them from scratch. This is useful to ensure that such efforts are sustainable beyond the lifespan of the project itself. In other cases, IFAD helps create platforms that are then sustained either by ongoing IFAD interventions or by their own internal logic.

Enhance stakeholder capacity for policy processes. In tandem with creating or supporting spaces for policy dialogue, or occasionally on a stand-alone basis, IFAD often seeks to enhance the capacity of smallholder farmers and rural populations to participate in policy processes – be it agenda setting, policy formulation or monitoring the implementation of policy. Providing training courses and capacity-building for producers and/or rural organizations and their representatives about the policy process and about the technical content of policies often allows such groups to make more substantive and informed contributions to dialogue about public policy and to better represent their organizations. This kind of training might be bundled with other types – for example, training on management and marketing – and can play a key role in ensuring that rural people's organizations speak the language of policymakers and therefore have an influence on the debate.

Example: In Brazil, the *Agricultural Development and Poverty Reduction* in the State of Maranhão seeks to “strengthen existing community organizations and foster the creation of new ones... to increase their ability to identify problems and priorities, improve their interaction with municipal authorities and participate more effectively in local discussion and decision-making platforms (collegiate bodies, for example).”

Outcome 2: Stimulate the production and utilization of evidence for the policy process

Evidence-based policymaking, a term that was first promoted actively in the late 1990s and early 2000s by the Government of the United Kingdom, is a concept that encourages all actors to engage rationally in policy processes by bringing to bear evidence in order to improve the performance of policies rather than seeking to influence the goals of the policy process. According to a paper by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the objective of evidence-based policymaking is to undertake “a more rational, rigorous and systematic approach” and is “based on the premise that policy decisions should be better informed by available evidence and should include rational analysis. This is because policy which is based on systematic evidence is seen to produce better outcomes”.⁶ Building on ODI's approach, Box 9 offers 10 tips for using evidence effectively in policy engagement.

IFAD is interested in this approach of bringing evidence to inform policy processes, and seeks to work closely with the government either by providing targeted analysis and assessments of successful models, or by providing capacity support that requires being a trusted partner, something that active dialogue during the agenda-setting period also helps to build. Trust, of course, is also built through undertaking long-term engagement, by demonstrating the capacity to bring to bear evidence that has positive outcomes on policy and, in some occasions, through alliances with other actors where IFAD can play the role of an “honest broker”.

6 See S. Sutcliffe and J. Court. 2005. *Evidence-Based Policymaking: What Is It? How Does It work? What Relevance for Developing Countries*. Overseas Development Institute (November), page iii.

Box 9

Ten tips for using evidence effectively in policy engagement

1. **Know the objective:** What is the specific piece of policy, practice or perception the evidence should be provided for?
2. **Know the audience:** Who has the power to meet the objective you set out? Who might be a useful ally? And do you have the right profile to achieve the objective?
3. **Know the timing:** Set objectives that make sense given current conditions – and provide information when it can be utilized.
4. **Build relationships and networks:** Policy objectives are almost always achieved in tandem with other actors, so build alliances to achieve results.
5. **Understand the complexities of policy processes:** Policy is a non-linear process, and requires flexibility to adapt to changing conditions. But experience with policy processes in each country gives insights into how things usually work.
6. **Understand the political nature of policymaking:** Factor in the political nature of policy work when attempting to achieve your objectives; develop a political strategy.
7. **Plan your engagement:** Think carefully about how to communicate policy evidence. Make your messages clear.
8. **Focus on solutions:** Rather than focusing only on analysing problems, propose solutions to policy problems.
9. **Be patient:** Policy outcomes take time and require patience. They do not always neatly fit into project cycles.
10. **Monitor, learn and adjust:** Keep track of good and bad outcomes to adjust strategies and objectives. Be flexible.

Adapted from ODI 10 things to know about how to influence policy with research.

Support for policy analysis and formulation. IFAD and IFAD-financed projects fund analysis that would inform new policies, regulations and laws; they support governments and other stakeholders in generating, evaluating and prioritizing information when drafting policies; and they provide support for the consultative processes in which policies are formulated and approved. This is one way in which IFAD helps to ensure that the policy environment in which its projects and grants are implemented is one that can facilitate rural transformation. In fact, financing for short-term consultancies/technical assistance for policy formulation is one of the most frequent policy activity types found in IFAD projects.

Support for technical assistance to analyse policies may happen in many different ways. As the process of formulating policy is iterative, in some cases IFAD provides support for inputs early in the process of formulation, doing more research-based work. For example, the Latin America and the Caribbean Division supported, through a regional grant programme, research on the connection and synergies between conditional cash transfer programmes and programmes aimed at rural economic development. The purpose of the study, which yielded a book with several country case studies as well as an overarching theoretical framework, was to see whether these two types of policies could be better designed to work together in future IFAD projects.

When IFAD provides support later in the policy process, when ideas are already closer to being formalized into discrete policies, a more concrete and politically sensitive approach is necessary.

Example: The **Ghana Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (GASIP)**, approved in 2014, intends to fund the drafting of a series of white papers (detailed policy documents used at the cabinet level) to address core underlying policy issues with the objective of improving the policy framework for smallholder farmers. Such papers will reflect higher-level consultations and greater consensus between the government and stakeholders on how to move the policy agenda forward than the research example mentioned above.

Additionally, and as in the example below, some projects go further to strengthen or support the process of policy formulation beyond the provision of just technical inputs to the policy process.

Example: The **Rwanda Dairy Development Project (RDDP)**, designed and approved in 2016, seeks not only to provide technical inputs into a new national dairy law, but also to support “stakeholder consultations and consensus building on the new policy ... and facilitation of the drafting and adoption process through the various organs of government, following the processes set out in the Cabinet Manual of the Office of the Prime Minister.” Thus, RDDP will not only provide evidence for the policy formulation, but will also help structure the process of garnering consensus among stakeholders for the new policy, and accompany the ministry as it brings the policy through various stages of formalization and approval.

Review policy implementation to identify gaps, constraints and blockages. Once policies have begun to be implemented, IFAD also can take a proactive approach to see what is working and what is not; where the gaps lie between policy intention and local-level implementation; and identify whether there are adjustments in the implementation arrangements that can be made to improve the performance of the policy or whether more substantive policy changes are needed. IFAD can support governments to review policy experience to identify implementation gaps and/or policy constraints and blockages. Given that some of the information collected will be about the ways that policies change during implementation, it may be useful to explore the causes of the changes. This can be part of the monitoring process to determine where further work is needed.

Example: in **Ethiopia**, the *Pastoral Communities Development Programme* has conducted a number of “policy implementation gap” studies. These do not explicitly seek to influence the policy itself, but rather to review the extent to which it is being effectively implemented on the ground and analyse the associated implications in terms of policy outcomes.

Share experiences at the regional level. Another activity aimed at sharing experience and contributing evidence, present particularly in IFAD’s grant portfolio where regional models of working dominate, is sharing experiences at a regional level among national policymakers in order to encourage the adoption of successful models and policies being piloted elsewhere.

Examples: In the **Southern Cone of Latin America**, IFAD provided long-term support through the grants programme to REAF (*la Reunión Especializada sobre Agricultura Familiar*, or the specialized meeting on family farming) of MERCOSUR, to enable governments and civil society to come together to share problems, experiences and opportunities for promoting family farming in the member countries. As a result, individual national governments were able to make good progress on designing and implementing their own public policies, in particular because it facilitated coordination between markets that were formally linked via integrated trade arrangements.

In **Asia**, the Asia and the Pacific Division is supporting a large grant to analyse how countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations region are successfully integrating their trade policies within the bloc and their food security policies, looking for ways to ensure that there are positive linkages between the two.

Draw out successful models and promote adoption or scale up. As there is an interest from many governments to learn from the experiences of IFAD-supported projects, IFAD is well placed to facilitate learning, to adopt lessons into new and existing programmes, and to support scaling up. Within the M&E phase of the policy cycle, IFAD primarily engages in utilizing project experience (and results from grants) to accumulate experience about models that have proven to be successful, to analyse and document those lessons, and to feed them back to governments so they can promote further adoption of the policy or increase the resources for the activity (scaling up).

Examples: In **India**, the violence against women initiative (“Shaurya Dal”) developed under the *Tejaswini Rural Women’s Empowerment Programme* has been scaled-up across Madhya Pradesh. IFAD’s supportive role was to highlight the contribution that projects make to rural development, rather than attributing changes to particular actors.

In **Nepal**, the successful experience of the IFAD-financed *Hills Leasehold Forestry and Livestock Project* was used to convince senior government officials of the effectiveness of a new pro-poor approach to forestry, which was then incorporated as a priority in the Poverty Reduction Support Programme and incorporated as a national policy. Consequently, the government increased investment in leasehold forestry from 6 to 22 districts. Notable in this success was capacity-building that preceded the increased dialogue as an increased capacity allowed a focus on space for dialogue.

In **Bangladesh**, the ICO hired a consultant to conduct a study aimed at providing a framework and agenda for IFAD to better support and contribute to national policy processes in that country (see Appendix 4.6). The report identified a total of 15 operational and policy-related successes under the currently ongoing projects that could potentially provide the basis for a policy engagement strategy, which were grouped into five broad thematic areas. For each of these 15 successes, it also defined a specific and structured plan for policy engagement.

IFAD participates in policy dialogue forums. IFAD has undertaken a major effort in decentralization over the past several years and now has almost 40 country offices. The presence of senior staff (CPMs and CPOs) in-country has increased the extent to which IFAD staff can play roles as active participants in policy dialogue in the country, either via sector/subsector working groups in-country where such groups exist, or in a more ad hoc fashion with the government ministries. In doing so, IFAD brings the evidence of its own experience to policy conversations and seeks to promote the utilization of the lessons learned in national policies and programmes.

Examples: The **Lao People’s Democratic Republic** is one of the growing number of countries where IFAD has acted as the chair of the subsector working group on agriculture: through its participation in that body, it helped, in 2015, to formulate the 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan and the government’s new Agricultural Development Strategy, as well as supporting government entities engaged in policy-related research.

In **Uganda**, IFAD country staff was able to engage in policy dialogue about micro and rural financial policy over a long period of time, facilitating a process of discussion about the future direction of policy. IFAD engaged with representatives of the private sector and rural producer organizations to bring evidence to the table, advocating for the need for a sound regulatory and supervisory framework for savings and credit cooperative societies (SACCOs), using evidence from the implementation of the Rural Financial Services Programme. This aimed to ensure the sustainability and growth of SACCOs and to influence the policymakers to acknowledge SACCOs as demand-driven, member-based and savings-first institutions.

Outcome 3: Enhance policy capacity of government

IFAD also supports activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of governments, as constraints to capacity are one of the core reasons that development, and IFAD, projects fail to meet their objectives and expectations. These activities underpin the entire policy cycle and focus on strengthening core functions and knowledge management for governments. There are three separate sets of activities worth recognizing.

Strengthen the capacity of government agencies. It is not always enough for the project to work on individual policies in order to improve the framework and environment in which projects are implemented. On occasion, the capacity of the government in planning, formulating and executing policy and other core functions is too weak to engage in other sorts of policy activities without central support. In these cases, and when government is willing, IFAD engages in strengthening the capacity of government agencies directly.

Example: in **El Salvador**, the *National Programme of Rural Economic Transformation for Living Well – Rural Adelante*, approved in 2015, seeks to strengthen the capacity of the operation planning, policy and strategy department of the Ministry of Agriculture in its ability to formulate and articulate implementation plans for a number of large strategies approved by the Government of El Salvador. While the ministry is strong in the implementation and formulation of some strategies, in others it needs specific support.

Operationalize or pilot national policy at the local level. The implementation of policies is the step in the policy cycle in which many other development partners stop actively participating: while they will be involved in the structuring of policy dialogue or in commissioning studies contributing to the formulation of new policies (or even the more political processes of lobbying to ensure such policies are passed), fewer agencies actively work to help the government mobilize policy in practice, or work to help policies that may have been on the books for some time become embedded in local practice. Nonetheless, policy implementation is one of the largest challenges in development effectiveness, and is often limited by budget constraints and capacities.

Through investment projects, IFAD can support governments to operationalize national policy at the local level and pilot new policy implementation models. Often, despite policies being well formulated on paper, there is a gap in understanding and capacity in implementing them on the ground. Often, a lack of resources and political will hinders effective implementation.

By utilizing projects as testing grounds for the implementation of projects, IFAD can contribute to the efforts of the government to deliver on its policies and provide evidence of what works so that approaches can be scaled up. This in turn builds the capacity of the government as a policy actor.

Examples: in **India**, through ongoing projects, IFAD has assisted the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to operationalize Tribal Sub Planning, a policy that requires the earmarking of funds to tribal areas by the departments of state government as well as union government.

In **Djibouti**, the Microfinance and Microenterprise Development Project has supported the government to implement its microfinance policies and regulations by supporting the establishment of a national commission for microfinance, which includes a monitoring cell. The establishment of this body has strengthened the institutional context of microfinance in the country and resulted in the regulation of the sector.

Promote inter-agency dialogue. In many countries, individual ministries have a tendency to work in silos and they have difficulties effectively addressing issues that involve collaboration with other ministries or agencies. This is of particular relevance today: ministries of agriculture are increasingly expected to take on issues around climate change adaptation and nutrition – both issues that traditionally have been addressed by different ministries; and the issue of effectively linking IFAD-supported projects with national programmes and so enhancing the implementation of those programmes is an important issue in a growing number of IFAD member countries. IFAD-supported projects can be structured to promote collaboration between the government agencies responsible for the different initiatives in order to develop multisectoral strategies or to improve coordination between programmes.

Example: Under the *Integrated Participatory Development and Management of Irrigation Project* in **Indonesia**, a policy-focused knowledge management centre will be established under the Ministry of Planning (Bappenas). A key dimension of its role will be to convene relevant ministries involved in the irrigated agriculture sector, strengthen operational collaboration between them, and promote policy dialogue among them at the national and local level for an improved and more consistent policy and regulatory environment for smallholder irrigated agriculture.

Chapter 3

How to incorporate country-level policy engagement into the COSOP

Introduction

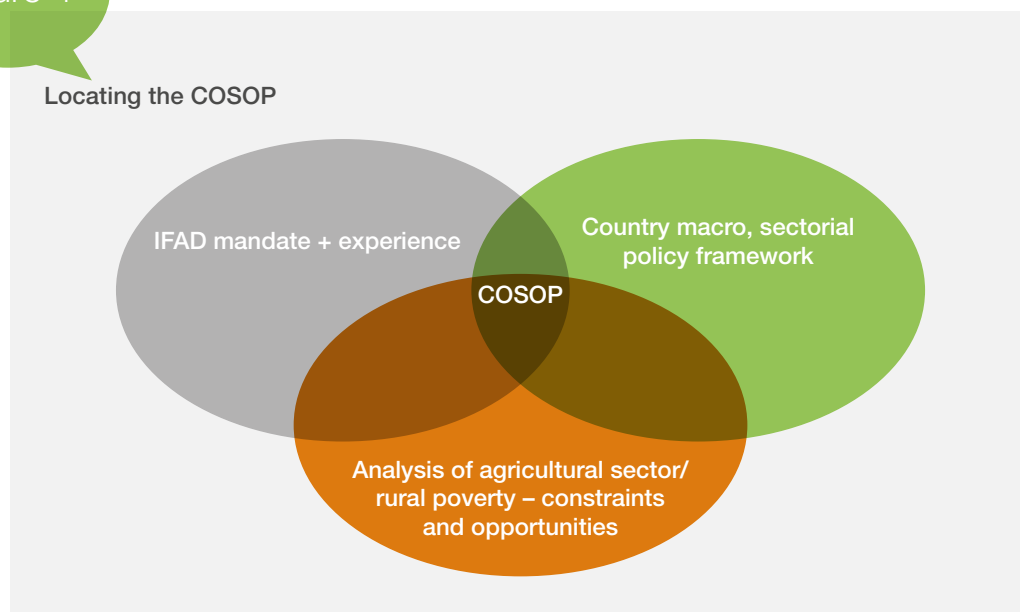
As part of its strategy to strengthen its development impact, IFAD is aiming to mainstream country-level policy engagement in its country programming, and this means focusing on the issue at the stage of the COSOP design. Thus, the commitment matrix of the IFAD10 consultation report⁷ includes the target for: “100 per cent of COSOPs to define a specific approach for country-level policy engagement appropriate to IFAD’s programme in each country” (Commitment no. 17). This chapter looks to explain both how to address policy engagement within the COSOP and what are likely to be the key elements of “a specific approach”.

The results-based COSOP seeks to position IFAD in the country in question and provide a framework for IFAD’s country programme. It is built upon, and responds to, three overlapping elements (see Figure 4):

- a review of the national macro and sectoral policy framework, which it should support;
- an analysis of rural poverty in the country, its location and the factors contributing to it, as well as the livelihoods of rural people living in poverty; and
- an understanding of IFAD’s comparative advantage in the country, based upon its mandate and the lessons it has learned through its past experience in the country and beyond.

As an integral part of the COSOP, the CLPE agenda needs to respond to all three dimensions.

Figure 4



7 Report of the Consultation on the Tenth Replenishment of IFAD Resources (webapps.ifad.org/members/gc/38/docs/GC-38-L-4-Rev-1.pdf).

At the heart of the COSOP is the country-specific strategic objectives and the key (outcome) indicators that will be used to measure the changes associated with the achievement of the strategic objectives. The COSOP is expected to describe “the project and non-project activities to be undertaken, including policy engagement, and how they contribute to the achievement of the expected results. This section will explain how non-project activities are linked with and support the investments to achieve the Strategic Objectives”.⁸

Here, the aim is not necessarily that the strategic objectives themselves should be policy related – or that one of the strategic objectives refers explicitly to a specific policy area; on the contrary, the expectation is rather that, more often, policy engagement will be one of the instruments, along with the projects and other activities, for the achievement of one, more, or all of the (thematically oriented) strategic objectives. Thus, a strategic objective such as “improved access of rural people to inclusive financial services” or “increased smallholders’ capacity and opportunities to access markets” would be expected to be achieved through investment projects, combined with engagement on policy issues, focused on these thematic areas.

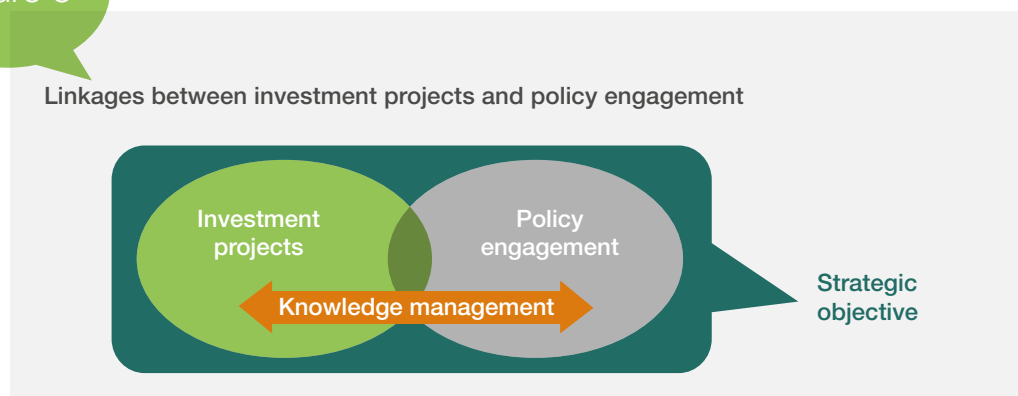
Put another way, CLPE needs to contribute to the achievement of one or all of the strategic objectives of the COSOP; and it is one of the activities that will be carried out, or tools that will be used, in the thematic areas that support the achievement of the strategic objectives. **So CLPE is intimately linked to the strategic objectives; and, conversely, CLPE that does not contribute to the achievement of the strategic objectives is almost certainly beyond the scope of what IFAD should be doing in the country.**

While IFAD frequently talks of country programmes being made up of “project activities” and “non-project activities”, in reality, the distinction is less clear-cut, and investment projects, grant-financed projects, CLPE, knowledge management and partnerships are all closely linked and interdependent. Projects can:

- support, and frequently operationalize, national policies;
- contribute understanding, lessons and evidence that can inform policy development;
- support consultative and participatory processes for policy development and negotiation, and support the capacity of the stakeholders involved in those processes;
- support the preparation of policy documents; and
- lead the CLPE agenda, often assisted and complemented by the efforts of the CPM/ICO.

Knowledge management links projects and policy engagement (see Figure 5): above all, knowledge products can provide the evidence base upon which IFAD-supported projects, and

Figure 5



8 Operational Procedures on Country Strategies, approved August 2016.

Table 2: Different notions of evidence

Researchers' evidence	Policymakers' evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Scientific” (context free) • Proven empirically • Theoretically driven • As long as it takes • Caveats and qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colloquial (contextual) • Anything that seems reasonable • Policy relevant • Timely • Clear message

Source: J. Young and S. Sumarto. 2006. *Bridging Research, Policy and Practice*.

IFAD itself, can contribute to country-level policy processes. As shown in Table 2, evidence does not necessarily need to be “researchers’ evidence”; what is important is it speaks to the specific needs of policymakers. So those products may be reports, briefs or even newspaper articles or films; they may present the results of desk reviews, surveys, interviews with farmers’ groups or the outcomes of policy forums; and they may serve to identify and document policy blockages or limitations, or gaps in policy implementation. It is also the case that the need to establish – and communicate – evidence for policy engagement can provide the clarity of purpose to a project’s knowledge management agenda and associated activities that may otherwise be lacking.

Key elements of the “specific approach for country-level policy engagement” in the COSOP

In defining a “specific approach” (the phrase used in the IFAD10 commitment), the intention is that the COSOP should articulate a strategy for CLPE, which explains how it will contribute to the achievement of the strategic objectives. It should identify the rationale and the broad areas for policy engagement, as well as the outcomes sought, the approaches to be used and the expected activities.

In some countries, particularly in those where there is already a strong policy engagement strategy and the COSOP does not envisage major changes of direction, it may be possible to go further and define a relatively detailed and complete policy agenda; in others, where there has been limited policy work in the country and the COSOP proposes to work in new thematic areas and on new issues, this will be less easy. In the latter case, the detailed agenda will be formed in the course of COSOP implementation, as the challenges of, and opportunities for, achieving the strategic objectives become clearer (see Box 10). **In all cases, space should be left to enable the country programme to be opportunistic in responding to policy openings as they emerge during the course of implementation.**⁹

A strategy for policy engagement should be built upon the following elements:

- A review of the current country policy framework and institutional context, its specific characteristics, strengths and weaknesses.
- A review of IFAD’s past experiences with policy engagement, if any, under the country programme, an identification of successes realized, and a drawing out of lessons learned.

9 This is, effectively, “strategic opportunism”, or the ability to remain focused on long-term objectives while staying flexible enough to solve day-to-day problems and recognize new opportunities. (D. Isenberg. *The Tactics of Strategic Opportunism*. *Harvard Business Review*, March 1987).

Box 10

The value of opportunism

Some opportunities for policy engagement can be predicted, for example, within the budget cycle; however, many others may turn up unexpectedly as circumstances in the country change. A change of government, the arrival of a new minister, a sudden political imperative, or even the failure of the government to respond effectively to a drought are all examples of situations that can create new spaces for IFAD policy engagement. What is critical is to be sufficiently flexible to respond rapidly and effectively to any request from the government for policy support.

- An identification of the broad thematic areas in which it is expected that IFAD/IFAD-supported projects will pursue a policy agenda under the COSOP, viewed in terms of their contribution to the achievement of the strategic objectives.
- The approaches (within investment projects, grants, CPM-led) that will be used to pursue policy engagement and the likely activities to be carried out.
- The links to the COSOP agenda for scaling up and knowledge management, and the opportunities/values for partnerships to pursue the agenda.
- An indication of resources required to deliver the agenda, both financial and human.

Each of these aspects is described in more detail in the checklist of issues to be covered in developing a COSOP approach for CLPE in section C. The “specific approach” itself can best be developed in a short working paper (5-10 pages), which can be annexed to the main body of the COSOP, and cannibalized to provide the necessary inputs into the main body. The checklist in section C can be used to provide a format for the working paper.

Checklist of issues to be covered in developing a COSOP approach for CLPE

The following represents a checklist of suggested issues to be covered in order to prepare the annex and/or the COSOP itself. It is not intended to be comprehensive, and the COSOP design team is not expected to “comply” with it. On the one hand, there may be other questions or topics of relevance in specific country contexts, while on the other it may not always be relevant, or possible, to go through all the topics posed here. It is intended solely for the purpose of offering broad guidance to thinking through the issues in the process of developing an approach for policy engagement within the country programme.

Checklist – COSOP approach for CLPE

Review of policy and institutional context

1. **Political framework for policymaking.** Here, the issues to understand include: (i) whether the policy framework is broadly state-led or pro-market, and pro-smallholder or not; (ii) the extent to which responsibilities for policymaking and implementation are decentralized (to state/provincial/district levels); and (iii) to the extent relevant, the link between policymaking at regional (i.e. supranational) and national levels. Contradictions and duplications should be highlighted where appropriate.
2. **Overview of policy framework, including national policies/strategies/programmes.** Here, there is need to focus on both the broad sectoral policies for agriculture and rural development, and more specific subsectoral policies in key areas of relevance to the COSOP and its strategic objectives (e.g. policies for irrigation, rural finance, farmer organizations). In some countries, the interest may be in subnational (e.g. state level) policies.
3. **Particular features of policy framework.** What are the relevant policy strengths, weaknesses and gaps? Are there any specific policy issues that could constrain project implementation (current and future) and/or the achievement of development impact; and where agreement may be needed relative to a review of the policy?
4. **Capacity for/approaches to policy formulation and implementation.** To include analysis of the institutions of government (in the ministry of agriculture and beyond, as relevant) responsible for policy development and implementation.
5. **Implementation gaps** and consequences, particularly at the local level. Does the government have the capacity and political will to implement policy in (remote) rural areas? What are the policy realities for rural people?
6. **Nature of policy processes.** Is there a history and culture of consultative policy processes in the agricultural sector? If so, who are the key stakeholders? Who is able (and not able) to influence the debate? Who is excluded? Are there any interprofessions, consultative forums, etc., in existence? Or are policy processes closely guarded by the government? Transparency and availability of government information?
7. **Political economy of key policy issues.** Are there particular policy areas of relevance where there are specific interest groups and influential individuals with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo where policy change is needed, or to change policies in their favour?
8. **Forum for policy dialogue between the government and its development partners.** Is there a sector working group (or similar)? How is it structured (hierarchy of groups/committees; who chairs, etc.)? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the arrangement? Are all major stakeholders represented, including rural producer organizations (RPOs)? How representative are RPOs of smallholder farmers?
9. **Relevant policy-related activities of other development partners.** Are there other development partners of government involved in any policy-related activities of relevance to the agriculture and rural development sector? Do these offer opportunities for linkages and collaboration?

Past IFAD policy engagement and lessons learned
10. IFAD-supported projects. Have any IFAD-supported projects, and/or the CPM/ICO); (i) had a policy-related component/subcomponent; or (ii) been involved in any policy processes?
11. Other policy-related activities. Have there been any policy-related activities beyond the projects – grants, involvement of CPM/ICO?
12. Achievements and lessons learned. What has been realized in terms of both outputs and outcomes? Are there any particular successes that can be highlighted? Are there any lessons as to what has worked/not worked – in terms of both the specific policy areas and the approaches used? Does IFAD have a specific comparative advantage in any particular area/approach?
Potential broad areas for policy engagement
13. Thematic areas. Broad definition of areas (e.g. irrigation, rural finance), specific policy areas within them, where possible (e.g. irrigation system management, agricultural finance). Which strategic objectives do they contribute to, and how? Is there scope for dialogue/progress in these areas, and reasonable prospects for open debate?
Approach, activities and resources required
14. Country view of IFAD's role. How do relevant ministries see IFAD's role in policy processes? Do other national stakeholders have a view of IFAD's possible role?
15. How will CLPE be done? Will CLPE be included as a component/subcomponent within projects? Will it be advanced through the grants programme? What will be the role of the CPM/ICO?
16. Likely activities. Draw on the typology of activities (Chapter 2) without being limited by it.
17. Resource requirements. What are the financial and human resources that can be applied to the CLPE agenda? (Is the agenda realistic given the resources availability?)
Linkages to other aspects of COSOP
18. Role of CLPE in scaling-up strategy. Is policy engagement the principal mechanism for scaling up, or does CLPE represent only a part of a broader scaling-up strategy?
19. Role of knowledge management. How will the knowledge management strategy, within and beyond the projects, contribute to the CLPE agenda?
20. Partnerships. Who are likely and possible partners in pursuing the policy agenda?

How to develop the CLPE strategy

How long does it take to develop the CLPE strategy, and who should do it? It is suggested that a minimum two-week, full-time input (and ideally more) would be required to develop the minimum elements of the strategy, though this depends on both the specific country context and the extent to which the person responsible for developing it has been involved in the country programme. It is likely to be easier for an outposted CPM, the CPO or a local consultant than for someone with less in-country experience. A combination of the CPO and a consultant/PTA specialist may be an effective one. In addition, the in-country CPMT can provide an excellent point of reference for building an understanding of the key issues. Generic terms of reference for preparing the CLPE strategy are shown in Appendix 3.

As part of the process of developing a CPLE strategy, sources of documentation, and information more broadly, would include those of the government and of IFAD and IFAD-supported projects. Knowledge products from projects, supervision reports, as well as the performance-based allocation system (PBAS) rural policy assessment, are likely to be important sources. Other sources would include:

- other relevant development partners in-country;
- development policy research institutes, both international¹⁰ and national;
- NGOs;
- farmers' organizations; and
- private-sector bodies, such as industry associations or chambers of commerce.

There exist a number of specific tools that can be used at different steps in the process of drafting a COSOP, as a way of structuring discussion with the in-country CPMT or among the team of IFAD staff and consultants writing the COSOP. Five tools, in particular, can be used to facilitate an event where information is gathered in a participatory way and all participating can contribute to the process of designing strategies or giving feedback. These are:

- **Context-evidence-links framework** – can provide important information about the context in which IFAD is working.
- **Horizon scanning** – helps to prioritize among competing policy topics to work on.
- **Alignment interest and influence matrix** – can be used to identify stakeholders and their positions on policy issues.
- **K* framework** – helps to structure the policy and knowledge management plans of the COSOP so that they best interact.

All of these are described in more depth in Appendix 6.

¹⁰ Possible sources may include Michigan State University, International Food Policy Research Institute, Overseas Development Institute, International Institute for Environment and Development, FAO-Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agricultural Policies unit, and Latin American Center for Rural Development.



Chapter 4

How to incorporate country-level policy engagement in project design

Introduction

More and more IFAD-financed projects contain specific components or subcomponents with policy objectives, whose outputs and outcomes are reflected in the project logical framework. Of the projects approved by IFAD's Executive Board between 2013 and 2015, more than 40 per cent contained a component or subcomponent focusing on policy.¹¹

These projects spanned all regions and were focused on the range of different subsectors in which IFAD works. Additionally, the design of the policy aspects of these projects (i.e. the specific activities the policy elements included) was also highly varied, spanning the range of activities defined and detailed in Chapter 2. Some work on formulating, approving and operationalizing policies, while others work on increasing the participatory nature of policy processes. They reflect the multisectoral and multi-phased approach that IFAD takes when engaging in country-level policy, and, in most cases, more than one type of activity was used jointly to meet the policy-related and project objectives.

Designing a policy component of an IFAD project is thus a highly context-specific process, which will vary depending on the type of policy the project plans to engage with and the specific strategy likely to be successful for that policy topic and country. This section of the guide book sets out some basic guiding questions to help those designing policy elements of IFAD projects, or contemplating doing so, on how to consider a range of options and ensure that the component is sufficiently embedded into IFAD and national processes.

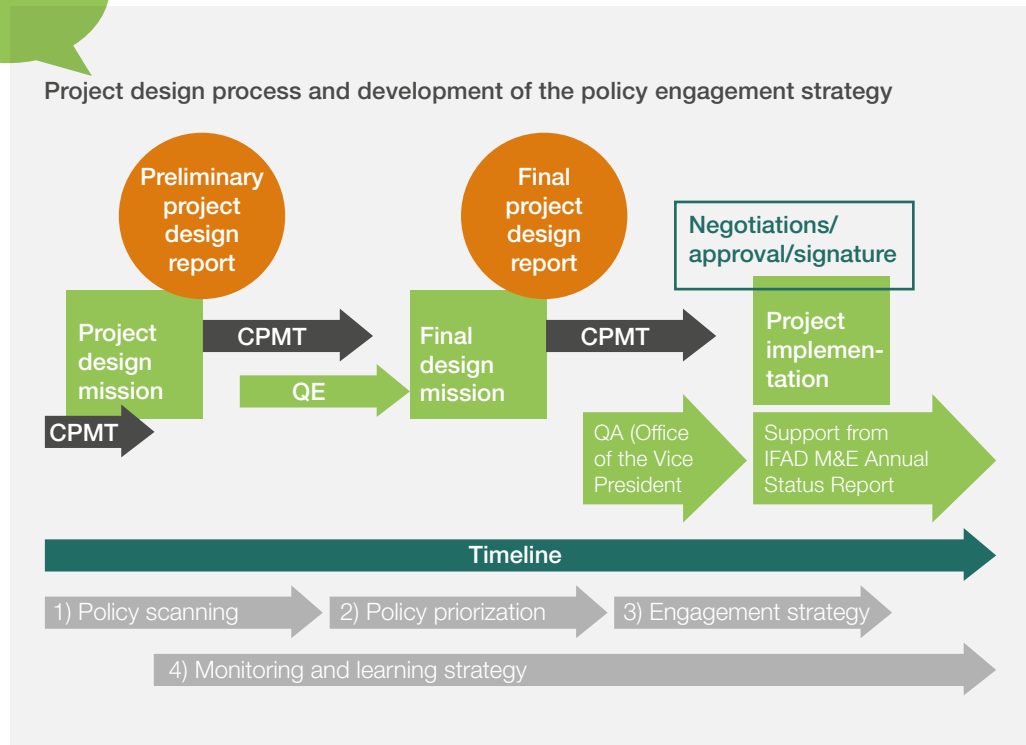
Figure 6 maps the typical project design process at IFAD and the opportunities within it for developing a policy engagement strategy. There are various approaches to designing the policy component of a project; in some cases, the team designing the concept note may already have an idea that policy activities would complement the other activities in the project and build in policy from the beginning. This interest in, and commitment to, policy may follow from the COSOP or from the country-specific CLPE strategy when already formulated, and this may be particularly so when the project concept note is attached to a new COSOP. In other cases, a commitment to including policy-related activities will be crafted as the project is designed.

In all cases, project activities related to policy should contribute to the project's theory of change,¹² and they may form the underlying conditions under which a project is likely to succeed. For example, in a project working in a specific value chain, the policy activities may serve to identify the key bottlenecks for smallholder market access, the solutions to which may enable the project to achieve much stronger results. In a project in which the institutional weakness at the local level is a core constraint for project implementation, activities related to

11 The 2016 review, which looked across the (then) current portfolio, demonstrated that 32 per cent of projects had a component or subcomponent on country-level policy engagement. This suggests that there is a growing emphasis on policy in IFAD projects.

12 A theory of change is the product of a series of critical-thinking exercises that provide a comprehensive picture of the outputs and outcomes that are needed to reach the development objective defined for the project. The theory of change explains the process of change by outlining the causal linkages in the project, and each outcome is mapped in logical relationship to all the others, as well as chronological flow. The links between outcomes are explained by "rationales" or statements of why one outcome is thought to be a prerequisite for another.

Figure 6



strengthening the strategic and planning capacity of local implementation agencies enable all other project activities to flow more easily.

Similar to the role in the COSOP, where CLPE needs to fit in the hierarchy of the objectives and contribute to achieving one or more strategic objectives, policy engagement and its related activities within projects need to contribute to the achievement of the project's development objectives and to specific outcomes within the projects' results hierarchy.

Again, similarly to COSOPs, knowledge management plays a key role in linking the project activities to the policy engagement agenda of the project. Strong M&E systems about project activities provide a base around which knowledge can be generated and transformed into knowledge products. That knowledge can be fed back into policy processes so that governments can learn from IFAD projects and mainstream this knowledge into their broader portfolio of policies.

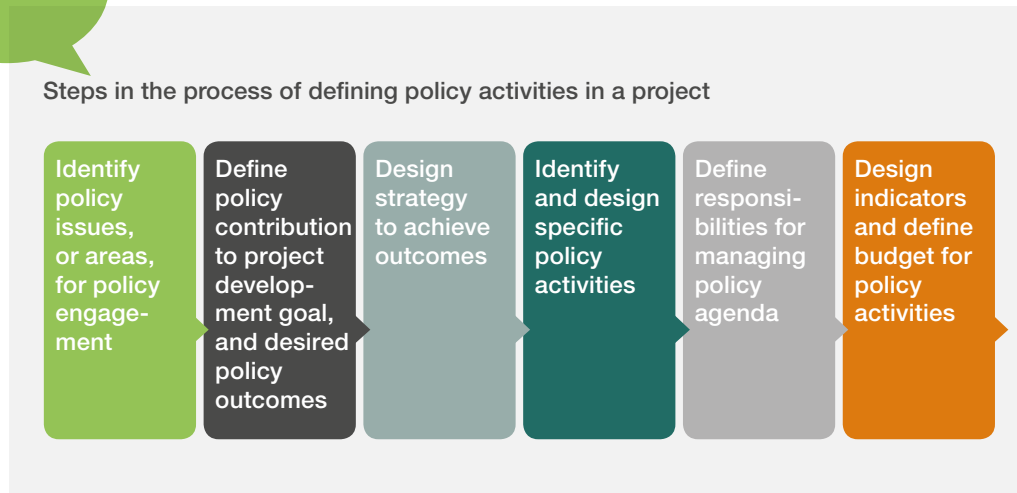
Key elements for designing projects with policy engagement

As was emphasized in Chapters 1 and 2, IFAD is interested in working across the full cycle of the policy process and through multiple objectives (enhancing participation, enhancing the use of evidence and strengthening government capacities). Therefore, projects are often designed to strengthen participation (e.g. through using the project to support or generate policy dialogue platforms while also working on strengthening the extent to which government agencies work together).

Figure 7 shows the steps in the process of designing a policy component or subcomponent for a project. The following paragraphs discuss these steps in more depth and show how they may fit into a typical IFAD project cycle. The design process is built on an understanding of the policy context, in terms of both the relevant policies themselves and the policymaking processes.

The first step is to identify the key policy issues – or at least the relevant policy areas – where the project might engage; and this is usually done either during beginning consultations with

Figure 7



the government and other actors when concept notes are drafted, or as the design progresses through consultations. The second step is to come up with the ideal outcome – or what would change between the status quo of the policy setting and the end of the project. The third step is to design a strategy meant to realize the objectives, which will also include, as a fourth step, the design and identification of specific policy activities that would facilitate the achievement of objectives. A key fifth step – frequently overlooked – is to define responsibilities for managing the policy agenda under the project. Finally, design teams need to develop indicators and define the required budgets for policy activities.

In the process of designing a project, policy issues can sometimes be easy to identify because they will be mentioned as constraints or areas for possible improvement in a number of consultations. These could be with the private sector, farmer groups and potential beneficiaries, as well as with local implementing agencies and various members of the government. Often, very specific issues are mentioned: for example, taxation levels for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), seed quality, restrictions on agricultural exports and rent-seeking by local officials. In some countries, the government will actively seek IFAD's help in identifying and working on these types of issues, in which case it should be possible to outline a number of specific interventions the project can undertake. In other situations, the specific policy issues may not be immediately identifiable, and here the approach may be to use the project both to bring together key stakeholders to identify the policy issues of importance to them and/or to use the project's implementation experience as the evidence basis for informing policies. In countries in which the government is not keen to discuss policy, or where there appears to be no major policy issues, a project may choose solely to build strong M&E and knowledge management systems in order to enable lesson learning, which might serve the government in identifying policy issues later on.

Once the policy areas have been identified and there is agreement as to the value of looking to respond to them through the project, the next step is to identify what precisely the project should seek to achieve and set about designing a strategy to achieving this. Unlike some other development partners who work exclusively on changing or adopting policy, IFAD's objective may also be related to increasing the number of stakeholders participating in the policy process, helping the government to design mechanisms to implement existing policies and/or monitoring and evaluating the implementation mechanism of existing policies in order to contribute to future phases of policy renegotiation. Some projects may tackle more than one of these ways of working. The Rwanda Dairy Development Project, in Rwanda, for example, will work on different dimensions of the policy process (policy formulation, policy implementation and institutional strengthening, and policy-related analysis and technical

assistance), whereas the Rural Adelante programme in El Salvador will work exclusively on enhancing the participation of stakeholders in the policy process and helping the government craft implementation strategies for their existing policies. Policy creation or change is not an explicit objective of that project.

While policy activities are usually inexpensive vis-à-vis other types of project costs, their benefits are sometimes difficult to visualize and their implementation can be complex (which is why it is difficult, though not impossible, to evaluate policy impacts). Therefore, without specific incentives within the design to follow through on policy activities, they may be overlooked. To ensure that policy engagement is an implementable and integral part of a project, it is critical to ensure that policy objectives are reflected in the project's logical framework and/or theory of change and the broader monitoring framework. Table 3 provides an example of the budget for a recent project with a policy component, showing the types of expenditure categories and expenses that are often budgeted.

It is recognized that it is difficult to come up with meaningful output and outcome indicators for policy engagement, and indeed, their value is often one of ensuring that a focus on the policy engagement activities is maintained rather than as a measure of substantive change. Additionally, it is also challenging to monitor and evaluate policy activities because CLPE work is often beyond IFAD's/the project's direct sphere of control and influence. Thus, while IFAD-supported projects can contribute to qualitative and quantitative change in policy processes, these changes also depend on inputs, and attitude and behaviour change, by other actors.

Nevertheless, indicators for policy activities do need to be crafted, and they need to be measurable: Table 5 in Chapter 5 offers a series of potential indicators at both outcome and output level, for different sorts of policy activities. In addition, some consideration needs to be

Table 3: Generalized budget for a policy component of a recent IFAD investment project

Subcomponent and activities	Indicative types of expenditures	Budget (US\$ 000s)
1 Policy formulation		
Drafting and consultation for national policy document	International consultant, national consultants, meetings, communication	200
Drafting of five specific laws and regulations to enable national policy	International consultant, national consultants, consultation meetings, communication	150
2 Policy implementation and institutional strengthening		
Support for decentralized policy implementation pilot in three districts (25 per cent of country)	Training, equipment, certification scheme, consultancy for implementation strategy	450
Messaging and support for behavioural change among citizens linked to national policy	Communications firm as consultant, and printing and publicity costs	350
Capacity-building for apex organizations and cooperatives to participate in and originate policy discussions	Consultants, training materials, trainings (room hire, transport, logistics)	350
3 Policy-related knowledge management (KM)		
Knowledge management for national policy pilot	Staff training, communications, consultancy	250
Other policy-related KM	Staff training, communications, consultancy	100
Total budget		1 500
As per cent of project total		5%

given as to the likely number of beneficiaries – direct and indirect – of the policy intervention; even if this is likely to be a somewhat speculative exercise.

Additionally, policy-related activities require not only a dedicated budget, but also a clear definition of responsibilities for managing and implementing the activities. The responsibility for policy elements will usually be located in the project management unit (PMU). Typically, it will be assigned to the project manager, a dedicated member of the project team on policy, or another member of the PMU, such as the M&E specialist. Terms of reference should be drafted (see Appendix 3.3 for an example of the terms of reference for a policy specialist within a PMU). Alternatively, the lead may be taken by a specific agency within the government (e.g. the Ministry of Planning, or a policy unit within the responsible ministry). External entities, such as universities or policy research institutes, may also play an important role in facilitating policy processes and/or preparing policy analysis or evidence. The project steering committee, often with high-ranking government officials, can also play a role in defining the policy agenda or endorsing the project's findings. In all cases, it is important to consider implementation arrangements and partners seriously early on in the design process.

In all cases, there are some guidelines for best practice:

- (i) Remember that IFAD's role is not usually one of policy advocacy – in the sense that IFAD has a specific policy outcome it would like to achieve either for the country at hand or in general. It is rather one of facilitating nationally owned policy processes, assisting governments and national stakeholders to achieve development objectives with a supportive and well-applied policy framework.
- (ii) Some policy issues may be identifiable during the project design process; others may emerge only through the project implementation experience. The policy agenda should usually include activities that support *processes* for identifying and addressing policy issues (multistakeholder forums, reviews of implementation experience, etc.), as well as those with a predefined aim (e.g. development of a national policy on rural finance).
- (iii) Work across the policy cycle if possible, rather than just advocating for policies to be drafted or adopted; work to ensure that there are mechanisms and budgets in place to implement and monitor them. IFAD projects can fund pilot schemes to implement policies, and build in sufficient resources to gather evidence about whether the pilot has been successful, which will help to inform the government about the approach and how it might be scaled up or changed before being scaled up.
- (iv) Build links with existing forums, groups and ways of working on policy at the national level to ensure sustainability and effectiveness of policy interventions.
- (v) Consider whether key actors need support to build their capacity to actively and effectively participate in policy processes, and if so what type.
- (vi) Understand how the policy elements relate to broader national policy issues, which may or may not be reflected in the COSOP, and can be addressed in other forums (e.g. agricultural sector working groups).
- (vii) Be precise, but realistic, about what can be achieved in a single project cycle on policy. For example, the process leading to and associated with parliamentary approval of legislation may mean that some forms of policy intervention can have an impact only much later and are beyond the control of the project.
- (viii) Reflect on whether and how the policy agenda can be linked to the knowledge management agenda. The latter can often contribute to the former.

Box 11

Ten recurrent issues for policy engagement identified during project design

1. Weak/lack of consideration of policy and institutional context – constraints and issues, processes and governance/political economy issues.
2. Lack of focus on policy engagement in the project as a whole.
3. Weakly articulated plan for policy engagement.
4. Policy engagement weakly integrated to other aspects of the project.
5. Policy engagement not (adequately) budgeted for.
6. Proposed policy activities (e.g. policy dialogue platforms) are not aligned to any policy outcomes.
7. In the logical framework, no outcomes or outputs related to policy agenda.
8. Lack of linkage between monitoring and evaluation (M&E), knowledge management and policy agendas.
9. Responsibilities for managing the project's policy agenda are not adequately assigned.
10. Potential role of the Project Steering Committee as player in the policy agenda rarely exploited.

Following the above guidelines will help to avoid some of the more frequent problems PTA's policy desk has seen when reviewing projects with a policy component, or projects that perhaps should have considered including policy components but failed to do so. These are given in Box 11.

Checklist of issues to be covered when designing a project with policy activities

The following represents a checklist of suggested issues to be covered in order to prepare a policy engagement component under a new project. Just like the COSOP checklist, it is not intended to be comprehensive, and it is not intended that design teams should "comply" with it. On the one hand, there may be other questions or topics of relevance in specific country contexts, while on the other it may not always be relevant, or possible, to go through all the topics posed here. It is intended solely to offer broad guidance for thinking through the issues in the process of project design and structuring the exercise.

Checklist
Background/context
1. Review of the key policies of relevance to the project. The key policies: sector-level and specific to the components/approach of the project.
2. Strengths and weaknesses of policies. Do these policies serve the economic empowerment of rural people or constrain it? Are the policies effectively implemented on the ground?
3. Political economy of key policy issues. Are there specific interest groups that want to maintain existing policies or, conversely, promote policy change?
4. Relevant policy-related activities of other development partners. Are there other development partners of the government involved in any policy-related activities of relevance to the project? Do these offer opportunities for linkages, collaboration?
5. Understanding national policymaking processes. How are policies formulated, debated and approved within the national system? How can IFAD contribute to and utilize existing methods and spaces of policymaking rather than creating stand-alone processes?
6. Understanding the interaction between national and local-level policy roles. How much authority and responsibility is delegated to subnational/local governments to formulate, implement and monitor policies? How well integrated are systems at these levels? What are the strengths and weaknesses of local actors and how can IFAD work with them or improve their capacity?
Rationale
7. Why should the project focus on policy issues? Is there reason to suppose doing so could achieve meaningful results? If so, what are they likely to be?
8. What are the specific policy issues, or broader policy areas, where the project can contribute to a national/subnational policy agenda?
Hierarchy of objectives
9. How will the policy component contribute to the overall project development objective? How does it fit into the project's theory of change?
10. What are the expected outcomes, outputs and activities of the policy intervention?
11. What are appropriate indicators at the different levels?
Detailed activities
12. Definition of detailed activities within the component/subcomponent, keeping in mind the ways that different types of policy activities can span the policy cycle and complement each other?
Implementation responsibilities
13. Who will have overall responsibility for managing the component or policy activities? Additional staffing requirements? Terms of reference?
14. How is the link made between the project M&E/knowledge management function and the policy agenda?
15. Existence of potential service providers, partners for implementation. Who will be involved and what is their capacity?
16. Role, if any, for the project steering committee relative to policy dimensions?
Costs
17. Definition of all inputs and quantities required for component and associated costs.

Developing the policy component

It is suggested that, in projects where policy will be a significant component, a policy specialist participate in the design missions, in the same way as having an expert in charge of any other component. Therefore, consulting on the structure of the component, and writing the project design report, appendices and working papers should be given the same amount of time as any other component of the project. Because policy engagement is a relatively new, or at least growing and developing, type of project activity for IFAD, PTA's policy desk can help to prepare terms of reference for those preparing policy components, identify consultants, and also participate in missions. A generic, draft terms of reference for a policy specialist as part of a project design mission is found in Appendix 3.2.

It is important for the person responsible for designing a policy component or set of activities to be aware of other sources of information. Specific studies undertaken by IFAD or external actors on the policies of interest to IFAD may not be available, but the design team should certainly consult IFAD documents, which would help to orient the design team to the policy context. This would include the COSOP, the most recent country programme evaluation (which usually reports on policy engagement outcomes), IFAD projects with similar objectives (whether from the country or others), relevant knowledge products created by IFAD, and country assessments produced by IFAD. Other development partners may have produced papers relevant to the policy engagement IFAD is planning (for that country or other comparable countries); and information may also be available from a variety of other sources, such as national and international policy research institutes, farmers' organizations, or private-sector bodies like a chamber of commerce.

As in the COSOP chapter, there are some already-existing tools that project design teams may want to consult when crafting a set of activities, subcomponents or components focused on policy (some, though not all, overlap with the tools analysed before). All are described in more detail in Appendix 6. These workshop exercises are best undertaken, whether formally or informally, by the design team and/or the in-country CPMT. They can help design teams to structure their thinking about the strategies and partners necessary to achieve policy-related project objectives.



Chapter 5

Monitoring and evaluation of policy activities

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the approaches for monitoring and evaluating policy engagement under IFAD country programmes and projects. These (country programmes and projects) are two distinct dimensions of IFAD's work with different M&E responsibilities – the former IFAD's, the latter the PMU's and/or the government's – and the approaches are, therefore, addressed separately.

There are four main purposes for monitoring and evaluating policy engagement at the levels of both the country programme and the individual project.

- **To learn about what works.** Identify and analyse the policy-related approaches used and activities conducted, both successful and less successful, in order to build on the achievements realized and ensure that the lessons learned are reflected in subsequent COSOPs.
- **To support management and decision-making.** Identify blockages, weaknesses or gaps in the policy engagement strategy during COSOP implementation, or identify opportunities for a stronger policy focus, and use this information as a basis for making changes in approach or emphasis where necessary.
- **To account.** Ensure that it is possible to report on policy engagement activities, outputs and outcomes, in particular through the COSOP Results Review and the COSOP Completion Review.
- **To promote stakeholder engagement.** Involve in-country stakeholders in the M&E process as an opportunity to gain their buy-in and promote a shared policy agenda, as well as to learn from their experience and perspectives.

Before going into the approaches, it is important to acknowledge the fact that monitoring CLPE is particularly difficult for a number of reasons.

- **Policy processes are complex.** The causal chain between activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts is not predictable, linear or straightforward, and the links are not always direct: well-implemented activities do not always lead smoothly to the outputs, or the outputs to the outcomes, etc.
- **Multiple actors have impact on policy.** Policy change usually comes about as a consequence of the actions of many different players (and their knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and mindsets) and the interactions between them. These are likely to be beyond IFAD's sphere of control, and possibly even sphere of influence.
- **Attribution versus contribution.** The higher up the hierarchy of objectives one goes, the more limited is the possibility of attributing change to the impact of IFAD and/or IFAD-supported projects. While IFAD contributes to policy processes and may facilitate policy change, it cannot claim attribution to specific policy outcomes. It also needs to be noted that attributing a change in a sovereign nation's policy framework to IFAD's involvement could be highly resented by the government and, therefore, potentially highly counterproductive.

Box 12

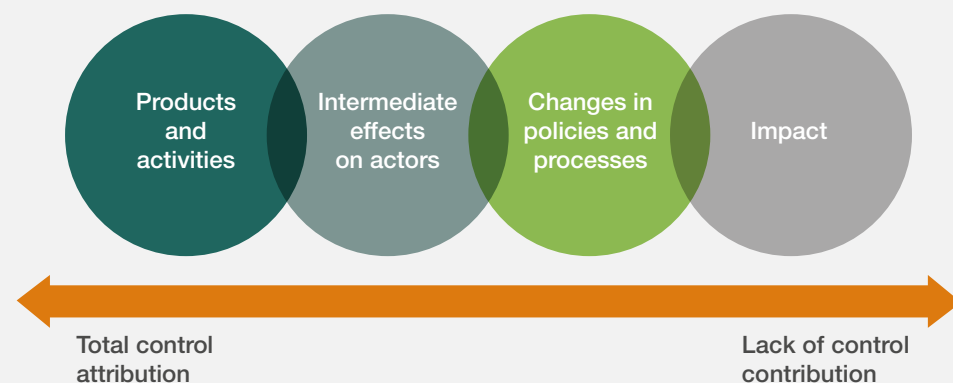
Five principles of monitoring the country programme/project policy engagement strategy

Building monitoring systems can seem daunting and overwhelming; it does not need to be. There are five principles that should provide the bedrock for an effective monitoring system for the engagement strategy.

1. Create a framework that's appropriate to purpose, scale and context.
2. Define realistic results within the sphere of influence.
3. Focus on actors and graduated change.
4. Generate evidence to understand IFAD's effect on policy. It is not necessary to seek statistical, numerical measure of policy influence.
5. Focus on contribution, not attribution.

- **The goal of CLPE.** The ultimate goal of CLPE is not one related to the policy framework itself, but rather to increasing the economic opportunities to smallholder farmers and other rural people. If it is difficult to measure a policy outcome, there are even greater conceptual and practical problems associated with measuring the impact of policy change upon the IFAD target group; and there are few approaches to draw upon. However, there is some progress being made on improving the way that policy outcomes are measured; some ideas are presented in this chapter.
- **The scope of CLPE is broad.** Country-level policy engagement is, by intent, a generic term, encompassing a range of different activities at different stages of the policy cycle. That means that there can be no single framework or approach for monitoring CLPE efforts: each monitoring plan must be developed in response to the specific country programme or project (see Figure 8).

Figure 8

Challenges of attribution for policy changes

Source: Weyrauch, 2004: 16. *Eslabones de Incidencia: Una Metodología para Registrar la Incidencia en Políticas de RIMSIP*. Working document no. 141.

A key tool in overcoming the conceptual and technical difficulties is the development of a “theory of change” (ToC) (also known as a “programme theory”) of how the policy activities are envisaged to result in improvements in peoples’ lives.¹³ IFAD-supported projects have increasingly been encouraged to use theories of change to explain how their interventions are likely to have impact, and policy activities, outputs and outcomes should form part of this.

A well-thought-out and regularly revisited ToC can be a useful tool, and provide the “backbone” of the intervention and M&E structure. If the aim is to influence policy outcomes, or policy processes, it is essential to think through how that change is expected to happen.

A ToC will also guide the choice of key evaluation questions, which are expected to address critical points in the ToC. This will, in turn, make sure that the indicators are set up to measure all relevant steps and processes, and not only to address one level, such as outputs. A strong ToC also helps review processes – whether these are mid-term reviews or end-of-project/programme evaluations – and makes it possible to put any unanticipated or unintended outcomes (if they arise) in context. There are several simplified and illustrative theories of change that can support in designing a project-specific ToC,¹⁴ and tools that can be used to support the development of the ToC.¹⁵

Other tools include the chain of assumptions,¹⁶ which aims to look at the assumptions policymakers have made about how the policy will improve peoples’ lives and to assess whether their assumptions are logical and sound. This too can be traced like the theory of change to see how project and programme policy activities influence the chain of assumptions.

Monitoring CLPE at the level of the country programme

Monitoring and evaluation of policy engagement is a critical element of COSOP management; while reporting on policy engagement is expected to be a key dimension of both the *RB-COSOP Results Reviews (CRRs)*, conducted every three years, and the *RB-COSOP Completion Review (CCR)*, prepared within six months of RB-COSOP completion.¹⁷ Both documents are the responsibility of the CPM/country team; PTA can support the process, if requested.

A possible framework for M&E indicators would involve focusing on six areas of performance:

- (i) Framing: What are the main policy activities carried out under the country programme, and what have they sought to achieve?
- (ii) Strategy and direction: Are the activities appropriate and addressing the key challenges identified?
- (iii) Management and governance: Are we implementing the policy engagement strategy as effectively as possible?

13 T. Pasanen and L. Shaxson. 2016. *How to Design a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for a Policy Research Project*. Methods Lab. London: ODI. Available at www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/10259.pdf.

14 See, for example, *Pathways for Change: 10 Theories to Inform Advocacy and Policy Change Efforts*. Available at http://orsimpact.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Center_Pathways_FINAL.pdf.

15 See, for example, outcome mapping – an approach developed by the International Development Research Centre as a way to plan and measure international development work. It focuses on changes in behaviour, relationships, actions and activities of people, groups and organizations with whom they work, engage and influence. It uses the categories “expect to see”, “like to see” and “love to see” to map desired changes.

16 CAFOD, Christian Aid, Trocaire. (Undated). *Monitoring Government Policies: A Toolkit for Civil Society Organisations in Africa*. Available at www.trocaire.org/sites/trocaire/files/resources/policy/monitoring-government-policies-toolkit.pdf.

17 See *IFAD Operational Procedures on Country Strategies*. August 2016.

- (iv) **Outputs:** Are the outputs appropriate for purpose and do they meet required standards?
- (v) **Outcomes and impacts:** What kinds of effects or changes have the activities contributed to?
- (vi) **Context:** How does the changing political, economic, social and organizational climate affect our plans and intended outcomes?¹⁸

Box 13

How does the Independent Office of Evaluation evaluate IFAD's country-level policy engagement?^a

It does so by posing a series of questions.

On the design of COSOPs:

- Which inputs, if any, were earmarked in the COSOP for CLPE?
- Which CLPE outputs, if any, were considered in the COSOP?
- Did the COSOP anticipate any synergies between CLPE and the lending portfolio?

On the implementation of COSOPs:

- Which inputs, if any, were used for CLPE?
- Which CLPE outputs, if any, were generated?
- Were there any synergies between CLPE and the lending portfolio?
- Which CLPE indicators, if any, were used during implementation of the COSOP?

Guiding questions for assessing IFAD's non-lending activities – relevance

- Are CLPE objectives clearly outlined in the COSOP? Are they relevant to the IFAD programme as a whole?
- Were resources earmarked for CLPE and explicitly outlined in the COSOP?
- How was the work and role of government and other partners taken into account in selecting the focus of CLPE?

Selected guiding questions for assessing IFAD's non-lending activities – effectiveness

- Did the foreseen activities take place? If not, why?
- To what extent and in what way did CLPE activities achieve the objectives?
- Did CLPE contribute to the replication and/or scaling up of innovation promoted by IFAD?
- How well has CLPE helped ensure a coherent country programme strategy, consistent with the commitments of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness?

Performance of non-lending activities, 2006-2013:

- COSOPs specified large and ambitious agenda for CLPE without specific implementation details.
- COSOPs did not discuss the resources needed to carry out CLPE.
- IFAD's focus during implementation was on projects.
- Insufficient efforts made to draw and disseminate lessons learned from projects for influencing CLPE.
- CLPE assessment in country programme evaluations.

Source: *Evaluation of Non-lending Activities in IFAD's Operations*. Presentation by Oscar Garcia, 23 June 2015.

^a The original presentation referred to "policy dialogue" rather than policy engagement.

18 Derived from T. Pasanen and L. Shaxson. 2016. *How to Design a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for a Policy Research Project*. Methods Lab. London: ODI. Available at www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/10259.pdf.

Not all of these areas may be relevant in all cases; however, they provide a point of reference for M&E of the country programme. They are also consistent with the questions that the Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) poses when evaluating policy engagement (see Box 13).

It is recognized that CPMs have limited time, and few have the appetite to conduct M&E for policy engagement over and above all of their other country-specific responsibilities. However, fortunately, a number of the elements that can contribute to providing an overview of the policy engagement approaches and activities are already in place. These comprise:

- implementation of progress reports;
- project supervision reports/aides-memoires;
- country programme issues sheet (CPIS)/project status report (PSR);
- IFAD client survey; and
- PBAS rural sector assessment.

Supervision missions of projects and mid-term reviews of the COSOP also provide opportunities to review policy work, and can be sources of data for post hoc reviews. These can be complemented by specific studies to review policy engagement activities, or to identify new opportunities for policy engagement. These can be relatively quick and cheap exercises, which can contribute to all the six purposes of M&E defined above (see Appendix 4.6 for the case study on the action plan for policy engagement in Bangladesh).

Monitoring CLPE at the level of a project

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of policy engagement is critical to projects that have policy activities or policy components. It is the responsibility of the project management unit (PMU) – and, within the PMU, the individual charged with leading the policy-related activities and/or the M&E specialist (according to the way in which M&E responsibilities have been defined in the project set up and reflected in the TOR of the PMU staff) – to monitor the activities, the outputs achieved and the resulting outcomes.

Unlike the framework guiding the M&E of country-level policy engagement in the country programme, the agenda for M&E in projects needs to be defined relative to the logic of the project itself, its logical framework, and the specific indicators defined for CLPE. Having said that, much related to CLPE is a *process* – in which *how* achievements are realized can matter as much as *what* is achieved; in addition, the causal relationship between activities, outputs, outcomes and impact is not always a direct or linear one, and there are limits to the scope for attribution of results. For these reasons, there are limits to the value of a logical framework-based approach.

On the other hand, being clear about what activities are intended to be carried out, the outputs and outcomes expected, and the eventual impact sought is a critical part of an effective design process, while the definition of results and accompanying indicators is a valuable tool for assuring accountability. For these reasons, Table 4 defines a range of possible indicators that can be used to assess progress achieved against project outputs and outcomes for a range of different sorts of projects, which use different strategic approaches to CLPE.

Table 4: Working list of output and outcome indicators for CLPE

CLPE strategy	First-level results (output)	Second-level results (outcome)
Scaling up and adoption by government of successful models and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of case studies/knowledge products completed • Number of review workshops conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project lessons reflected in government policies, strategies or programmes • Government budget includes (increased) provision for scaled-up models and initiatives
Creating space for policy dialogue between national stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of policy consultations held (national/subnational) • Integration of policy dialogue spaces to national policy processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of policies or policy instruments approved • Policies receive greater visibility or national relevance
Enhancing capacity of national stakeholders to participate in national policy processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of stakeholders trained on policy-related topics • Number of participants on policy-related learning routes • Number of policy briefs prepared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction of stakeholders with policy framework (rating 1-6) • More participatory/inclusive policy processes • Increased private investment in the relevant sector/subsector
Strengthening the capacity of government agencies to formulate national policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff trained on policy-related topics • Number of policy consultations held • Number of policy options papers prepared • Process for policy development defined 	
Policy analysis and short-term technical assistance for policy formulation financed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of policy options papers prepared • Number of policy processes that draw on papers prepared 	
Operationalization of a national policy at the local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National policy rolled out through project activities • Number of local staff trained on policy-related topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons from the local level reflected in government policies, strategies or programmes

Assessing the impact of policy activities

Above and beyond tracking the indicators present in the results framework or logical framework, monitoring and assessing policy impact requires actors to keep track of actions, meetings and changes as they happen in real time, if possible. If these kind of logs are not kept, either because there is not a specific expectation that the engagement will lead to results or because the actions take place in a relatively ad hoc way by a number of actors over a large period of time, these stories of policy engagement will have to be re-created in a post hoc fashion. This obviously leads to distinct challenges in ensuring that the actions attributed are correct (such as triangulation with a large series of actors to check the story being conveyed). There are several possible ways that actors can keep track of activities as they go along in order to facilitate knowledge about what happened in policy areas and why.

- **Activity/impact log:** An activity/impact log is a simple way to aggregate information systematically, which over time can show the impact the work is having. Having a catalogue of data can be the first step to demonstrate evidence that IFAD had a contribution to the greater policy change.

- **After Action Review (AAR):** This tool can be used to make quick assessments of progress. Checking on progress periodically can be important to determine if policy activities are headed in the right direction. The information derived from conducting the review can determine if resources need to be reallocated or goals reassessed. The AAR is most commonly used as an internal learning process, helping to guide discussion around a specific activity. It asks four questions: *What was supposed to happen? What actually happened? Were there any differences and why? And What would one have done differently next time?* The AAR can be helpful for sharing knowledge and understanding within a team, for building trust among team members, and for overcoming fear of making mistakes.
- **Stories of change:** Stories can be used to narrate the change policy activities are making. To do this, it is possible to use already existing information (such as an impact log or evaluation reports) and turn it into a narrative. Stories of change can be told about a process, an entire “project” or about one part of it; the sort of changes documented are typically changes in policy, or shifts in the way a policy issue is talked about or engaged with. By transforming facts into stories, it is more likely that people will read, learn and pass on what they have learned or achieved. They add colour and life to descriptions of change. Stories of change are also good for communicating learning to broader audiences.
- **Episode study:** Episode studies are helpful for understanding IFAD’s part in changing policies. Like case studies, they focus on a clear policy change. However, they trace the change backwards, starting from the change and following the lines of evidence to determine what contributed to the change. A case study, on the other hand starts with an organization’s contribution and looks forward. The advantage of using an episode study is that by working backwards you may have a more realistic view of the range of factors, including IFAD’s contribution.
- **Bellwether methodology:** The bellwether methodology determines where an issue is positioned in the policy agenda queue, how lawmakers and other influential individuals are thinking and talking about it, and how likely they are to act on it. By definition, bellwethers are gauges of future trends or predictors of future events. In the methodology, “bellwethers” are knowledgeable and innovative thought leaders whose opinions about policy issues carry substantial weight and predictive value. Bellwethers may include different groups, including policymakers (legislative and executive), civil society/advocates, think tanks/academia, media, private sector/business representatives, and development partners/funders. Individual bellwethers are selected based on a range of characteristics, including their content expertise, geographic diversity, gender and ethnic diversity, partisan representation (for legislators), and cross-sector experience.¹⁹

In late 2016-early 2017, PTA, APR and RIA collaborated to conduct a study aimed at assessing the impact of IFAD’s policy engagement on policy change in four countries in the Asia and Pacific region and developing a methodology that can be used for similar studies elsewhere. The approach follows a two-part process: IFAD narrative identification and development, followed by narrative testing and exploration using the bellwether methodology.

19 See the Harvard Family Research Project: www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/advocacy-and-policy-change/evaluating-an-issue-s-position-on-the-policy-agenda-the-bellwether-methodology.

The study looked at IFAD's contribution to:


- **Viet Nam:** Changing the strategic approach underpinning the National Targeted Program on New Rural Development (NTP-NRD), a primary instrument of the Vietnamese Government in implementing a rural development policy.
- **Indonesia:** Informing the government's approach in the implementation of the Village Law, on the basis of a community-driven development approach piloted in the remote areas of Papua and West Papua, within the framework of the National Programme for Community Empowerment (PNPM).
- **India:** Providing the evidence to state governments on approaches to community-based resource management, leading to the approach being scaled up across the entire northeast region of the country.
- **Nepal:** Transforming over a period of 20 years a small IFAD-financed pilot in pro-poor community forestry into a national programme for leasehold forestry being implemented by the Forest Department.

The results of the study, and the methodology developed through it, are expected to provide valuable lessons and tools for future evaluations of IFAD's policy impact, and in time to be reflected in updates of the guide book.



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Appendix 1

COSOP results measurement framework with CLPE focus


1.1 Pakistan RB-COSOP results framework (2016-2021)²⁰ (excerpt)

Country strategy alignment	COSOP Strategic Objectives	Assumptions	COSOP Milestone Indicator	COSOP Institutional/Policy Objectives (in partnership mode)
SDGs 2030 Vision 2025 PRSP-II	COSOP Goal: Reduce rural poverty in a sustainable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic rural poverty in participating communities in IFAD project is 20% less than the national average 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One million poor and smallholder farming households assisted in improving incomes and reducing poverty sustainably Less than 20% of the children (under 5) and women are underweight/ stunted in the 500,000 participating households in IFAD-supported projects 	
Vision 2025 “People-centric and aimed at reducing poverty through expansion of income support programmes, employment creation and economic empowerment” PRSP-II Pillar III. Protection of poor and vulnerable through employment generation and social protection programmes Baseline 40% of rural population is poor. Ultra-poor lack productive assets. Smallholder production is scattered and lacks market linkages. Rural youth lack productive skills. Women are disadvantaged.	(SO2): Policy and institutional strengthening for community-led development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial and local governments have systems in place to institutionalize the CDD approach Community institutions have capacity to identify the needs and manage the public funds allocated A gender-sensitive uniform land tenure system is developed in Gilgit Balistan Provinces have an operational climate change resilience policy and strategy addressing water security, cropping adjustment and infrastructure security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community driven development institutionalized backed by a legal framework Operational and administrative procedures are established to transfer public funds to community level 2,000 COs linked to formal local government system for rural development and service delivery (starting with AJKCDP) 10,000 households have secure land titles for new developed land Over 500,000 beneficiaries educated in climate change impacts and receiving climate information services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalize community-based rural development into government systems Engagement with other main multilateral and bilateral donor agencies and newly created Climate Change Division for national policy and strategy formulation for adaption to climate change and building climate resilience

²⁰ May not reflect the most current template for COSOP results framework.

1.2 United Republic of Tanzania RB-COSOP results framework (2016-2021) (excerpt)

Country strategy alignment <i>What is the country seeking to achieve?</i>	Key results for RB-COSOP <i>How is IFAD going to contribute?</i>			Indicative lending and non-lending activities for the next 6 years contributing to the outcome and milestone targets
	Strategic objectives <i>What will be different at the end of the RB-COSOP period?</i>	Outcome indicators <i>How will we measure the changes?</i>	Milestone indicators (by end 2018) <i>How will we track progress during?</i>	
<p>Mkukuta II (National-level plan, mainland)</p> <p>Goal To accelerate economic growth, reduce poverty; improve the standard of living and social welfare of the people of Tanzania as well as good governance and accountability. Strives to promote broad-based growth and enhancement of productivity, with greater alignment of the interventions towards wealth creation as a way out of poverty.</p> <p>Thematic areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cluster I: Growth for reduction of income poverty Cluster II: Improvement of quality of life and social well-being Cluster III: Governance and accountability <p>Main targets</p> <p><i>Overall:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macroeconomic stability maintained GDP growth accelerated (from 7.0% in 2015 to 10% p.a. by 2024/2025) Population growth slowed down (from 3.0% p.a. to 2.7% p.a. by 2024/2025) <p><i>Agricultural sector:</i> Agricultural growth increased (from 4.2% in 2015 to 6.3% p.a. by 2024/2025)</p> <p>ASDS II/ASDP II (sector-level) goal Contribute to Tanzania's national economic growth, reduced rural poverty and improved food and nutrition</p>	<p>SO1: Institutional performance, coordination and accountability to IFAD target groups and their organizations at central and local levels have improved so as to enable greater effectiveness and transparency in policy formulation, greater collaboration and partnerships, and enhanced programme implementation and results.</p>	<p>* (i) ASDP II M&E system established & functional with relevant indicators on institutional coordination and performance, and accountability mechanisms to non-state actors at national, regional and district level for usage by ASLMs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BL: Partially functional Target: Fully functional <p>(ii) Number of enabling policies and regulations promulgated and operational related to agriculture (crops, livestock and fisheries) and rural development benefiting IFAD target groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BL: 28 Target: TBD (by ASDP II/IFAD) 	<p>(i) % of DADPs that have a result framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BL: TBD (by ASDP II) Target: 90% <p>* (ii) (a) number of enabling policies promulgated and operational; (b) number of pro-poor policies, legislation and regulations enforced at the local or central level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BL: 28 Target: TBD (by ASDP II) 	<p>A) Non-lending: (to be supported by country grants)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Growth and Economic Empowerment Strategy and Operational Plan Value chain Development Strategy and Operational Plan Proposal for Zanzibar Agriculture Sector-Wide Programme: Approach, Rationale and Proposal Fostering good land governance for inclusive development in Tanzania (approved in Dec. 2015) <p>B) New lending:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture Sector Development Programme (ASDP II): target approval 2017 Highlands Milk shed Development Project (HMDP): target approval 2016 Drylands Development Project: target approval 2018 Zanzibar Agricultural Sector Development Programme (ZASDP): target approval 2019 (contd.)



Appendix 2

CLPE in the logical frameworks of projects

2.1 Bhutan: Commercial Agriculture and Resilient Livelihoods Enhancement Programme) (excerpt)

Component 3: Institutional support and policy development			
Narrative summary	Key performance indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Outcome 3: Strengthened agricultural institutions and policies for improved and resilient agricultural and marketing practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≥ 70% of value chain stakeholders report the use of market information in investment decision-making; 60% of value chain stakeholders report satisfaction with the policy and regulatory framework as providing a fair distribution of incentives, costs, benefits and risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme M&E reports Line agencies, Department of Agriculture Marketing and Cooperatives (DAMC), Food Corporation of Bhutan Ltd. and Business Opportunity and Information Centre reports Sector studies and reports Programme survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests will proactively implement the 11th Five Year Plan strategy for enabling private-sector engagement and participation within the process of commercialization of agricultural development
Output 3.1: Strengthened value chain and marketing knowledge and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market Information System, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests and DAMC providing relevant (real-time) information to farmers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme M&E reports Line agencies, DAMC, Food Corporation of Bhutan Ltd. and Business Opportunity and Information Centre reports Sector studies and reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate technical and process support is provided to develop the models and approaches on the ground, to access learning, and to document good practice (presently a weak part of IFAD projects)
Output 3.2: Climate change resilience and value chain development lessons mainstreamed in agricultural policies and sector strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced engineering norms for building climate-resilient irrigation systems Vegetable and dairy development policies enhanced based on multistakeholder consultation processes and programme lessons (resilience, value chain and marketing) Regulatory framework for private-sector development and public-private partnership (PPP) in agriculture sector developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme M&E reports Line agencies reports Sector studies and reports Policy documents Regulatory framework document for private sector and PPP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue and collaboration between government agencies/staff and external stakeholders is successful and generates meaningful lessons and insights for policy development

2.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina: Rural Competitiveness Development Programme (excerpt)

Component 1: Enabling environment for inclusive subsector development			
Narrative summary	Key performance indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions (A) – Risks (R)
Outcome 1: The improved policy and institutional environment attracts smallholders and investors to the selected subsectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US\$29 million private investments leveraged in selected subsector pro-poor development Subsector stakeholder platforms (SSP) generate three subsector policy development proposals with their corresponding regulatory framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline and impact surveys Monitoring reports of facilitators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) Willingness of national and entity stakeholders to cooperate and to create an enabling environment for selected subsectors (A) Demand for subsector development
Result 1: Smallholder platforms at the cluster and subsector levels improve value chain coordination and subsector governance, inform public policies, and orient investments in order to warrant long-term subsector competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 12 cluster stakeholder platforms (CSP) (8 by FY4), 10 established and in operation Three subsector stakeholder platforms established and in operation at the county level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring reports of facilitators M&E reports Business proposals Minutes of CSP/SSP meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) Readiness of local authorities and of private-sector actors to play a lead role in efforts to improve inclusiveness and coordination along the value chain
Result 2: Appropriate technical and business development services are made available at the local and entity levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 public extension staff with updated skills and competencies Quality and outreach of advisory services locally provided responds to requirements of business proposals A voucher scheme for business development services, organizational and technical advisory services has been set up and in operation by FY3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension staff competence gap analysis for each subsector and training planning Reports of producer associations and cooperatives on the performance of business development services Monitoring reports on the quality of the service providers – M&E reports/ Integral Model of Diagnosis for Co-operatives and Associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) Willingness of development partners and professional bodies to participate (A) Existence of private and public advisory services that respond to the current needs of the sector (R) Classic procurement and financial management system might create delays

2.3 Ecuador: Project to Strengthen Rural Actors in the Popular and Solidary Economy (excerpt)²¹

Component 1: Capacity-building			
Narrative summary	Key performance indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions/risks
Outcome 2: The Central Corridor Ecuador Project (PSE) sector has improved operating and normative policy instruments upon project completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of provincial dialogue platforms and 100% of national platforms trained or supported and operating continuously At least three second-tier networks/organizations created or strengthened and participating in platforms Four solutions proposals for eliminating PSE barriers formulated and validated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue platform reports Records of networks set up Evaluation of networks and other groups strengthened Final evaluation Baseline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual budget ceilings correspond to implementation resource needs in quantity and timeliness Climate conditions and natural disasters remain stable Services market (supply of qualified and experienced technicians) at central and regional levels responds to demand and timeliness
Output 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five provincial platform and one national set up and supported 125 members (50% women, 20% young people) from organizations and five from decentralized autonomous governments trained in PSE public policies and cross-cutting skills Five agreements on setting up and operating second-level networks and organizations prepared and approved Four solutions proposal documents prepared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platform reports Reports on internships and exchanges Records of registration of organizations Monitoring reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markets for products promoted and prices remain stable

²¹ May not reflect the most current formatting template.



Appendix 3

Examples of terms of reference

3.1 COSOP design: generic terms of reference for policy specialist

As part of the larger COSOP design process for (country), you will be tasked with designing a strategy for country-level policy engagement (CLPE). This should explain how the policy engagement will contribute to the achievement of the strategic objectives of the COSOP. It should identify the rationale and the broad areas for policy engagement, as well as the outcomes sought, the approaches to be used and expected activities.

It should at the same time recognize that at least part of the agenda for policy engagement will be formed in the course of COSOP implementation, as the challenges of, and opportunities for, achieving the strategic objectives become clearer, and thus it should be structured to enable the country programme to be opportunistic in responding to policy openings as they emerge during the course of implementation.

The strategy for policy engagement should be built upon the following elements:

- A review of the current country policy framework and institutional context, its specific characteristics, strengths and weaknesses.
- A review of IFAD's past experiences with policy engagement, if any, under the country programme, an identification of successes realized, and a drawing out of lessons learned.
- An identification of the broad thematic areas in which it is expected that IFAD and IFAD-supported projects will pursue a policy agenda under the COSOP, viewed in terms of their contribution to the achievement of the strategic objectives.
- The approaches (within investment projects, grants, CPM led) that will be used to pursue it, the likely activities to be carried out, and the level of resources – both financial and human – required to deliver the agenda.
- The links to the COSOP agenda for scaling up and knowledge management, and the opportunities/value for partnerships to pursue the agenda.

Each of these aspects is described in more detail in the checklist of issues to be covered in developing a COSOP approach for the CLPE (see the IFAD guide book for CLPE, Chapter 2 or the "How to do note").

In order to prepare the strategy, you would be expected to draw on documentation from, and meet representatives of, government, IFAD and IFAD-supported projects. Knowledge products from projects and supervision reports, as well as the PBAS rural policy assessment, are likely to be important sources. Other sources would include:

- other relevant development partners in-country;
- development policy research institutes, both international²² and national;

²² Possible sources may include Michigan State University, International Food Policy Research Institute, Overseas Development Institute, International Institute for Environment and Development, FAO-Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agricultural Policies unit, and Latin American Center for Rural Development.

- non-governmental organizations;
- farmers' organizations; and
- private-sector bodies, such as industry associations or chambers of commerce.

The expected output of the strategy exercise would be a short working paper (~5-10 pages), structured along the lines above. The working paper will eventually be annexed to the main body of the COSOP and used to provide the necessary inputs into the main body. Your contract would be for a total of (10?) days.

3.2 Project design: generic terms of reference for policy specialist

(to be added to according to the project context)

Working closely with the other mission members, you will design a policy component/subcomponent for the project. This should support the project in, and contribute to, the achievement of its development objective. The project strategy for policy engagement may focus on one, more or all stages of the project cycle; the activities may include any from the list of 10 defined in the guide book for CLPE, Chapter 2.

Specifically, you will:

- review the relevant policy and regulatory framework, its specific characteristics, strengths and weaknesses;
- meet with national stakeholders to understand their concerns with it;
- identify/confirm the key policy issues – or at least the relevant policy areas where the project might engage;
- contextualize the policy dimension in the project's overall theory of change and logical framework, including indicators, at the various levels;
- identify what it is the policy component should seek to achieve: the ideal outcome – or what would change between the status quo of the policy setting and the end of the project;
- design a strategy meant to realize the objectives, including the identification and design of specific policy activities that would facilitate the achievement of objectives;
- define the responsibilities for managing the policy agenda under the project, players in the processes defined, and the partnerships that would be required; and
- identify the unit costs, quantities and the required budgets for policy activities.

Each of these aspects is described in more detail in the checklist of issues to be covered when designing a project with policy activities (from guide book, Chapter 3).

In designing the component, particular sources of information may include:

- government officials;
- relevant development partners in-country;
- farmers' organizations;
- private-sector companies, and bodies such as industry associations or chambers of commerce;
- development policy research institutes, both international and national; and
- non-governmental organizations.

3.3 Terms of reference, Policy Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) – Rwanda Dairy Development Project

The Rwanda Dairy Development Project will work to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the dairy sector to supply quality milk to domestic and regional consumers through small-scale producers. The project includes a component (Component 3) focused on the policy and institutional framework for the dairy industry. The objective of this component is to facilitate the consolidation of an evidence-based, inclusive policy framework and institutional structure for the Rwandan dairy sector. Within the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) in the Government of Rwanda, the project will seek to appoint a policy specialist, who will take responsibility for the successful implementation of Component 3 of the programme. These terms of reference describe the profile of the person to be recruited, the objectives of his or her position, the specific skills needed, and a list of responsibilities.

The person responsible for Component 3 should ideally have an advanced degree in the social sciences (e.g. political science, economics or political economy) and approximately 10 years of experience in policy advocacy, policy analysis or public management. The position will be located within MINAGRI and should work in conjunction with the project manager in the SPIU.

The overall role of the specialist in public policy will be to manage and lead processes related to the analysis, formulation, approval, implementation and monitoring of public policies and institutions identified under the programme. The specific objectives are:

- (i) identify opportunities for project action related to the national-level policy;
- (ii) lead or accompany processes of formulation of public policies – which include consultation, drafting and approval of process – and will necessitate working with a wide range of actors at the national and subnational level;
- (iii) facilitate the understanding of public policies in the areas of the project at the grass-roots level (i.e. with dairy farmers and their organizations); and
- (iv) help to build capacity at the national level and at intermediate levels (e.g. with sector groups or subnational government) to effectively participate in the national policy process.

The specific knowledge, experience and characteristics required are:

- (i) extensive knowledge of national politics and policy, including government development strategies;
- (ii) experience in the implementation of public policies;
- (iii) capacity to analyse and explain details of policies to government and non-governmental actors (including rural people's organizations);
- (iv) capacity to propose, commission and comment on analysis and studies, which will contribute to the development of knowledge about public policy, particularly related to flagship government programmes (e.g. Girinka, One Cup) and policies (e.g. the local economic development strategy);
- (v) ability to lead and work in multidisciplinary teams, including managing national and international consultants; and
- (vi) ability to communicate and articulate effectively (in both writing and in speaking) the projects' approach, objectives and successes.

The specific responsibilities of the role include:

- (i) ensure implementation of activities under the component and complementarity and coordination with the activities of other components to ensure that the policy framework meets the needs of producers and other members of the value chain;
- (ii) coordinate and manage consultants charged with undertaking policy formulation and policy-related knowledge management;
- (iii) coordinate with apex organizations (Rwanda National Dairy Platform, Vet Council) charged with facilitating processes of policy formulation;
- (iv) coordinate with the government and non-governmental stakeholders through the Agriculture Sector Working Group;
- (v) monitor and assist with the budgetary and administrative issues related to implementing pilots for policies on milk sanitation and community animal health workers;
- (vi) ensure that the core principles of the project and component, including inclusiveness and partnership, are applied during all phases of implementation;
- (vii) provide ongoing information to the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) coordinator and to the M&E system on knowledge related to improving the quality and effectiveness of public policies; and
- (viii) support the ministers, permanent secretary, director generals and senior officials of MINAGRI and related agencies in developing strategy and formulation policy with particular attention to the dairy sector.

Required qualifications:

- have a bachelor's or master's degree in economics, agriculture economics, econometrics or equivalent work experience;
- good experience in economic development policies and analysis;
- have experience in planning and budgeting methodology and process;
- familiarity with the statistical surveys, gathering, processing and analysis;
- ability to analyse results and prepare policy and decision reports; and
- good practical experience in using the computer and computation skills.

3.4 Terms of reference for a study to review the policy landscape for smallholder irrigated agriculture in Indonesia

Background

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and IFAD are currently working with the Government of Indonesia to design an Indonesia Irrigation Sector Project.

The project will support smallholder irrigated agriculture on schemes of various sizes. It will focus initially on 70 potential target *kabupaten* (political subdivision) in 10 provinces. In addition, however, it will also cover all ex-PISP (ADB-financed Participatory Irrigation Sector Project) subprojects for which civil works have not yet been implemented. This will add five new provinces with 27 potential new *kabupaten*. The total target project area is therefore 15 provinces with 97 potential target *kabupaten*. The total budget for the six-year project is expected to be in the order of US\$500-US\$600 million.

The project is expected to have four main components:

- (i) improved agricultural production and market access;
- (ii) improved irrigation systems management;
- (iii) improved irrigation and drainage infrastructure; and
- (iv) strengthened policy and institutional frameworks for irrigated agriculture.

The project design process seeks to respond to the Government of Indonesia's expectation that externally financed projects offer innovative solutions to the development challenges the country faces; that those innovations – of products, approaches and technology – can be scaled up; and that it is assisted to learn from the implementation experience and draw on it to develop new policies, institutional arrangements and programmes at the national level. The project is being designed, and will be implemented, within the framework provided by the government's policy and strategic priorities relevant to smallholder irrigated agricultural production and produce marketing. Implementation will be intended to assist the government to: (i) operationalize those priorities; and (ii) draw out evidence from implementation in order to provide feedback on relevant national, provincial and district policies and practice.

The project would thus be structured and managed to: (i) encourage and facilitate the piloting of innovative approaches and technologies, particularly relative to subprojects supported; (ii) conduct studies to review the experiences gained with the innovations promoted; (iii) analyse the evidence, discuss the findings with stakeholders, and synthesize the conclusions; and (iv) support the scaling up beyond the project of successful approaches, methods and technologies – both within the project and beyond it, through public policies, institutions and practices. This may be described as its innovation, learning and scaling up, or ILS, agenda.

Scope of the consultancy

The aim of the consultancy would be to inform the project design process as to how best the project can be structured and organized to provide an effective contribution to the development of an enabling institutional and policy framework in support of smallholder irrigated agriculture. The consultancy assignment would be carried out by a team of three specialists: the team leader, a knowledge consultant and an irrigation specialist. Specifically, the consultancy team would seek to strengthen Component 4 of the project: "Strengthened policy and institutional framework for irrigated agriculture", and make recommendations for operationalizing and costing it. The team should also propose a definition of responsibilities for guiding and leading these activities through the arrangements for the governance and management (including M&E) of the project. The team's output should include suggestions for priority areas of activity. These could include, feasibly, some or all of the following: support for multistakeholder consultative processes (to identify value chain and/or policy issues, review policy proposals, etc.); support for studies (reviews of implementation experience, field studies, thematic studies); institutional support, to agencies with responsibility for policymaking and/or to organizations of smallholder farmers to enable them to participate in policy processes; advocacy and communication activities targeted at policymakers and/or legislators.

In order to deliver these outputs, the team would be expected to carry out a focused review of the knowledge sector for smallholder irrigated agriculture. This would involve the following:

- (i) An overview of the key policy and institutional issues that constrain the development of smallholder irrigated agriculture. While the government will not be the only source of information for this activity, it will be important to obtain from key government institutions an inventory of relevant policies, as well as an agreement regarding the issues to be examined.

- (ii) A review of relevant suppliers of policy-relevant knowledge, analysis and positions, including agencies from within the government and others, which may include policy research institutions, non-governmental organizations, universities, civil society organizations (including those representing smallholder farmers), private-sector actors, consultants and development partners.
- (iii) A review of the demand for policy from within the government (national and subnational), both the executive branch (relevant ministries) and the legislative (elected government officials).
- (iv) A mapping of how the various stakeholders come together, and their capacity, policy interests and levels of influence.
- (v) A review of currently existing processes, formal and non-formal, for identifying and analysing policy issues, policy development and assessment, and stakeholder consultation at all stages of the cycle.
- (vi) An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the current approach to policymaking, and the opportunities for, and threats to, a more evidence- or experience-based approach.

The assignment will be expected to commence around 25 February 20... The team will be expected to conduct the work principally in Jakarta. Key informants would include representatives of the stakeholders defined above; the Knowledge Sector Initiative will also be an important point of reference, both for building a conceptual understanding of the assignment and for identifying key players and processes. Team members should also make two visits to selected province/*kabupaten* offices, in order to better analyse the policy and institutional context at these levels.

Within the overall terms of reference, specific responsibilities of the team members will be as follows:

- (i) ... (team leader) will be responsible for managing the assignment; for leading, coordinating and managing the inputs of the other team members; and for writing and drawing together those inputs in order to deliver a comprehensive and substantive review and set of recommendations in the team's final report. (Total 20 days)
- (ii) ... (knowledge consultant) will have particular responsibility for reviewing the existing policy processes and the opportunities for a more evidence- and experience-based approach. The consultant will lead the review of the suppliers of policy-relevant knowledge and intermediaries of this knowledge and produce short case studies/examples to demonstrate good practices. (Total 30 days, including two field visits)
- (iii) ... (irrigation specialist) will have particular responsibility analysing the key policy issues constraining smallholder irrigated agriculture and for assessing the demand for policy knowledge. The specialist will lead the mapping for the policy stakeholders and produce short case studies/examples to demonstrate good practices. (Total 30 days, including two field visits)

The assignment is expected to be completed, with the submission of a final report, by 15 May 20...

3.5 Terms of reference for the development of the Policy Engagement Action Plan for the United Republic of Tanzania

The new COSOP for the United Republic of Tanzania for the period 2016-2021 was approved by the Executive Board in April 2016.

The COSOP recognizes that there is a large number of often conflicting policies and processes for inclusive agricultural transformation in Tanzania, and that the policy context in Tanzania has been made particularly challenging as a result of policy reversals with successive governments.

The COSOP makes it clear that IFAD's policy engagement agenda will contribute to the achievement of the proposed strategic objectives, and will complement, support and draw on the experiences and lessons of its ongoing and future investment programmes. Areas for policy engagement will thus focus on issues of relevance for the Agricultural Sector Development Programme (ASDP) II and the future Zanzibar Agricultural Sector Development Programme (ZASDP), public-private-producer partnerships, dairy development and sustainable rangeland management. A number of specific non-lending activities have also been programmed to deepen the policy and strategy engagement with key stakeholders on priority sector issues, and to sharpen the implementation effectiveness of the ongoing portfolio and future pipeline. In addition, during the Executive Board discussions, Board Members specifically requested that attention be given to some specific policy issues, such as water user rights for the rural poor for irrigation purposes, and the challenging agriculture business climate.

IFAD has significant opportunities for a deepened approach to policy engagement. It is the current chair of the development partners' Agriculture Working Group (AWG), which endeavours to promote coherence and consistency in development assistance to agriculture through coordination of development partner support, policy dialogue and reduced transaction costs. In addition, the country office team will be devoting more time to providing effective support for policy engagement, drawing on the various consultative forums involving development partners (AWG), the Agriculture Non-state Actors Forum (ANSAF) and the government (the Agricultural Sector Consultative Group).

In order to identify the most promising policy engagement opportunities for IFAD in Tanzania, prioritize them, and identify approaches, costs and responsibilities for pursuing them; **a consultancy study aimed at leading to a policy engagement action plan for Tanzania (mainland and Zanzibar) is to be conducted.**

The study would:

- (i) Review the activities under the current country programme, both lending and non-lending activities, and identify: (a) particular policy and regulatory bottlenecks and risks; and (b) particular successes emerging, in terms of technologies, institutional arrangements and approaches, that appear to offer scope for scaling up into national policies and programmes.
- (ii) Review the scope of IFAD's policy engagement to date, the approaches and funding mechanisms used, the successes achieved and the lessons learned.²³
- (iii) Identify possible policy areas where government may be particularly interested in:
 - (a) learning from the lessons from the experience of IFAD-supported projects; or
 - (b) drawing on IFAD support to make progress on what are priority policy issues for it.

²³ The policy desk within the Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA) is currently working on defining a methodology for assessing impact of policy activities. The consultant should liaise with PTA in order to determine how best to work on this aspect.

- (iv) Identify (a) relevant forums/processes; (b) the key stakeholders involved in them – from government, civil society (rural organizations, non-governmental organizations, policy research institutes), the agro-private sector, etc.; and (c) potential partners/allies, including also the government’s development partners.
- (v) Identify opportunities for IFAD to strengthen its contribution to national policy processes in terms of broad thematic areas and/or specific policy issues. This should take into account the relevance of the issues to the strategic objectives of the COSOP and the likelihood of being able to make progress on them.
- (vi) Define an action plan for policy engagement within the country programme. This may focus on different stages of the project cycle (everything from identification of policy issues to assessment of policy results). It would define:
 - the outcomes sought, the outputs and the activities to be undertaken;
 - responsibilities for implementing it, which may include project management units and steering committees, as well as the IFAD country office (ICO) CPM;
 - partnerships to achieve the outcomes desired, as appropriate;
 - in broad terms, the likely costs associated with the different threads of it; and
 - a simple approach for monitoring and evaluating progress and results achieved.

In order to carry out the work, the consultant should meet with:

- the IFAD country office;
- key relevant ministries: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MALF), Ministry of Industry and Trade, Prime Minister’s Office, local government, etc.;
- other government/quasi-government agencies: Big Results Now, Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania, Tanzania National Business Council, etc.;
- project management units and representatives of the steering committees for IFAD-supported projects;
- representatives of the private sector: Agricultural Council of Tanzania, Tanzania Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Agriculture, Tanzania Private Sector Foundation, etc.;
- civil society – ANSAF, MVIWATA and other organizations of rural people, non-governmental organizations, policy research institutes, etc.; and
- other development partners active in the agricultural/rural development sphere.

The final output of the consultancy would be a Policy Engagement Action Plan, which will be presented in draft form for comments to the IFAD country office, the development partners’ AWG and MALF, and amended in response to the comments received. The time frame for execution of the Policy Engagement Action Plan will be the same as the new COSOP’s – that is 2016-2021, with the possibility to extend policy engagement beyond the COSOP period in at least some areas as needed.

The consultant will be hired from 1 October to 15 December 20..., for a total of 30 working days to conduct the assignment.

The total amount requested from the Knowledge Product Fund is US\$20,000, made up of US\$17,000 in consultancy fees and US\$3,000 to be used for a workshop to be held in Tanzania. Any additional travel costs will be met by the East and Southern Africa Division.



Appendix 4

Case studies of policy engagement

These case studies are designed to provide specific examples of IFAD policy engagement. Each case study adopts a different perspective – and emphasizes different aspects – of IFAD policy engagement activities. In designing the case studies, the attempt was to bring to the fore evidence from countries in all of IFAD’s regions: Ghana in West and Central Africa (WCA), Sudan in Near East, North Africa, Europe and Central Asia (NEN), Nepal in Asia and the Pacific (APR), El Salvador in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and Uganda in East and Southern Africa (ESA). Additionally, there is a policy case study on regional intergovernmental organizations, formal and informal, that facilitates policy processes in LAC, which have been supported through IFAD’s grant programme, and one on a specific policy study commissioned in Bangladesh.

The objective of these policy case studies is to highlight what has been done in the past and therefore provide options for structuring policy engagement components of projects, or policy engagement strategies for COSOPs, going forward. In order to do this, several case studies compare the COSOP policy components with the policy-related strategic objectives of the projects and grants. This allows us to understand the extent to which the COSOPs were influential in designing the policy objectives of the projects and have an idea of what was actually implemented. This is the case of Ghana, Nepal and Sudan. While the Ghana and Nepal case studies trace the evolution of policy engagement processes in a given time period through COSOPs and projects, the Sudan case study mostly focuses on two projects that illustrate IFAD country-level policy engagement without identifying an evolutionary pattern.

The Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA) has also written additional case studies of activities that were financed by the IFAD Innovation Mainstreaming Initiative (IMI), and therefore reflect activities additional to the project cycle. The IMI was a three-year initiative to enhance IFAD’s capacity to promote innovations to positively impact rural poverty; some of the IMI funds were made available to fund small, innovative projects for country-level policy engagement. The IMI-related case studies are drawn from Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, the East African Community, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mexico, Tajikistan, Tonga and Viet Nam.²⁴

²⁴ See, at the following link, these policy engagement case studies: www.ifad.org/topic/overview/tags/clpe.

4.1 IFAD's role in the reform of policies for the Ugandan microfinance sector

Summary

Key objectives: To remain engaged in Uganda and redesign the Rural Financial Services Programme (RFSP) to focus its support on savings and credit co-operative societies (SACCOs), while at the same time providing the Department of Microfinance support and resources to rethink the policy framework.

Lessons and successes: The highly successful nature of this engagement strategy strengthens the idea that IFAD should build and utilize its political capital when it is the key/only donor available to act as an interlocutor for a specific policy. The case study suggests that IFAD's willingness to engage the government created an opportunity to play a key role in influencing the policy framework that followed, and that continuous engagement is required.

Introduction

The Rural Financial Services Programme (RFSP) began in 2002 in alignment with the government's Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture, which identified rural financial services as one of 13 key thematic areas to concentrate efforts to reduce rural poverty. The project was focused on supporting and complementing efforts to develop the microfinance industry, focusing on strengthening microfinance institutions and apex organizations.

Specific policy context

While the project was initially designed under a favourable (though evolving) policy framework in 2006, the government introduced an abrupt change to this framework, adopting a much less market-driven approach for the development of the sector and taking instead a more "interventionist" top-down stand, with the objective of creating one saving and credit cooperative (SACCO) per subcounty. This made it impossible for RFSP to maintain its intervention strategy as per design.

While most development partners gradually withdrew from the sector given the less-than-favourable policy environment, IFAD decided to remain engaged and redesigned RFSP to focus its support on SACCOs, while at the same time negotiating with government some measures to mitigate the major risks that the new policy was posing for project implementation.

IFAD engagement

As part of the project redesign, a thorough M&E system was put in place to allow the generation of regular data and information on the effects of the new policy framework on the sector. The knowledge and analysis thus generated were then used by the Department of Microfinance and IFAD to stimulate and inform the policy debate at different technical and political levels. By the time the project closed in 2013, growing consensus had emerged about the need to rethink the existing policy framework, which proved to be unfavourable for the development of the sector and not consistent with good practice.

When, in 2012, the government asked IFAD to start the preparations for a new project in microfinance, following RFSP, IFAD engaged the government in a dialogue on the key principles of a conducive policy framework, as emerging from the evidence collected from the implementation of RFSP, including a rethinking of core parts of the existing policy framework. Rather than treating a policy change as a strict precondition for the new loan, though, IFAD took a more constructive approach based on agreeing with the government on the above-mentioned key policy principles, while at the same time providing to the Department of

Microfinance the support and resources to rethink the policy framework, with particular focus on the need to introduce an appropriate regulatory framework for microfinance institutions. The policy change, which was discussed with senior levels of IFAD management, was never made a formal condition for the loan.

Outcomes

The project design process was then used as an opportunity to further engage and support the government in a thorough process of policy dialogue. An international consultant with sector-specific knowledge as well as a strong background and understanding of the political economy of microfinance regulation in Uganda was hired to assist with the project design. The country team was eventually able to capitalize on the technical expertise of the design team, the good links to the technical staff of the ministry, the political capital IFAD had accumulated by staying in the sector after the policy change, the extensive evidence gathered from the previous project's M&E system, as well as the interest of the CPM and the access to government, in order to engage the department in this process.

The new project included a small component focused on supporting the development of the new policy framework and IFAD continued to remain actively engaged through project supervision. As a key achievement of this process, a Tier 4 Microfinance Institutions Bill, which has been awaited by the sector for several years, was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers and submitted to Parliament.

The highly successful nature of this engagement strategy has led the government to acknowledge IFAD as a key partner in the microfinance sector; in fact, the government has recently asked IFAD to lead the consultations with other development partners potentially interested in supporting the operationalization of the bill. As a result of this effort, a group of development partners, including IFAD, the World Bank, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Department for International Development, has been catalysed around this initiative. The World Bank, given its technical capacity and expertise, has now taken the leadership in designing a new project to support the implementation of the bill, with IFAD participating as a cofinancier.

Lessons learned

A series of lessons emerge from this case, above and beyond the idea that IFAD should build and utilize its political capital when it is the key/only donor available to act as an interlocutor for a specific policy. First, IFAD's willingness to engage the government in a less than perfect policy framework created an opportunity to play a key role in influencing the policy framework that followed. Second, using projects as evidence to shape later policy frameworks require robust M&E systems that are able to capture detailed lessons about what works and what does not under different policy conditions. Third, it suggests that successful cases emerge when CPMs have the time and interest to invest in the topic, and utilize funds and specialized personnel available for project design, implementation and supervision to focus on policy initiatives. Specific knowledge of the sector, as well as the political economy in question, is necessary. Fourth, the case suggests that continuous engagement is required: once policy frameworks are changed, long approval and implementation processes follow. Projects should include a budget to follow these processes, when possible, and consider new opportunities for consolidating policy implementation.

4.2 Samriddhi – Rural Enterprises and Remittances Project (RER): An overview of IFAD’s policy engagement into project lending in Nepal

Summary

IFAD funding: US\$38.6 million.

Key objectives: The development objective of the RER/SAMRIDDHI project is that viable rural micro and small enterprises (RMSEs), in both farming and off-farming sectors, provide sustainable sources of income to poor households, migrant families and returnees. The policy component of the project aims at promoting RMSEs and migration policy development by enhancing the capacity of national stakeholders to represent their interests.

Lessons and successes: IFAD’s experience of policy engagement in Nepal suggests that when the policy agenda remains solely a series of good ideas or suggestions embedded in COSOPs, it is unlikely to be implemented and to achieve results. The central role played by policy components in the 2013 COSOP and 2015 RER/SAMRIDDHI project shows that IFAD’s policy engagement in Nepal has become more significant and should produce concrete results. The RER/SAMRIDDHI experience shows that policy reform is facilitated when projects are able to demonstrate the positive impact of a policy change and key stakeholders cooperate to pursue the opportunity for policy reform.

Introduction

The purpose of this case study is to provide an overview of IFAD’s policy engagement activities in Nepal in recent years. IFAD’s experience of policy engagement in Nepal suggests that when the policy agenda remains solely a series of good ideas or suggestions embedded in COSOPs, it is unlikely to be implemented and to achieve results. Instead, COSOPs must have specific strategies for policy engagement, which are then transformed into lending activities via project components. This allows country and project teams to identify specific policy areas to work in and appropriate interventions to target the policy issues identified. In the case of Nepal, the 2013 COSOP, which contained much more specific policy objectives, led to a project in 2015 with a clearly defined policy component, focused on specific policy areas around migration and remittances. Previous COSOPs, which mentioned policy, but did not put forward a specific strategy, did not translate into successful policy engagement.

Specific policy context

Nepal is a low-income country whose economy is dominated by agriculture, accounting for more than one third of GDP and employing more than two thirds of the population. There is significant ethnic diversity among the population, with many different languages and cultures, and the country is rich in natural resources but also fragile. Nepal is divided into three agroecological belts: the Terai, comprising the low plains and the foothills; the Hills, comprising medium-high and high hills; and the alpine mountains. Administratively, Nepal is divided into five regions (Eastern, Central, Western, Mid-Western and Far-Western), 75 districts governed by district development committees, 58 municipalities, and 3,912 village development committees. Poor governance and corruption have hindered Nepal’s political and economic development.

During the recent political transition, governments and political parties have struggled to address issues related to corruption, accountability and transparency. Economic growth is highly dependent on the degree to which political stability is maintained. Nonetheless, conditions for agriculture are still a strong determinant of the country’s overall rate of economic

growth, given the large share of GDP contributed by the agriculture sector and the fact that the farm sector employs the majority of the population. Nepal's agriculture is dominated by small fragmented holdings producing food crops mainly for their own consumption. Less than 20 per cent of agricultural production is commercialized, and Nepal has an agricultural trade deficit. In recent years, the most dramatic economic change has been the inflow of remittances, which now constitute about 22 per cent of Nepal's GDP.

IFAD engagement

IFAD's engagement in country-level policy in Nepal between 1999 and 2012 was assessed as moderately unsatisfactory by the Independent Office of Evaluation in 2013. Although IFAD's field presence expanded with the establishment of an IFAD country office in 2008 and the placement of a country programme officer in Nepal, IFAD's agenda for policy engagement was not implemented. While the COSOPs covering the period 1999-2012 included relevant points for policy action, they were overly ambitious and lacked specificity regarding objectives and the resources needed to achieve them. The 2000 COSOP identified three areas for policy dialogue, but it did not specify how IFAD planned to engage in these policy areas. Similarly, the 2006 COSOP stated that the dialogue on key policy issues would be included in PBAS consultations, with the expectation of engaging in a policy dialogue with the government. Despite this, the 2013 country programme evaluation (CPE) was unable to identify concrete examples or evidence of IFAD's influence and achievements in policy dialogue.

For this reason, two of the three recommendations offered by the 2013 CPE were policy related. The first recommends that IFAD ensures that all projects build on institutional analysis to support the strengthening of community organizations with the intention to make civil society organizations key partners in IFAD operations and in policy dialogue. The second recommendation is broader, and is about strengthening the operational link between the policy agenda detailed in the COSOP and the loan portfolio. The expectation is that IFAD and the government would jointly identify relevant policy issues in the COSOP and embed them within project design and implementation. By implementing this recommendation, projects would become powerful tools to develop policy lessons based on successful achievements and to promote policy dialogue.

Outcomes

Changes in line with these recommendations are visible in the 2013 COSOP and a new project designed in 2015. When the CPE was written, IFAD and the Nepali Government were engaged in designing support for the seed subsector under the new programme, Improved Seeds for Farmers Programme. As part of the design process, the partners identified policy issues in the seed subsector and agreed that a seed subsector policy or strategy needed to be developed. Similarly, the 2013 COSOP makes country-level policy engagement the focus of strategic objective 3, which consists of promoting inclusive, accountable and sustainable rural institutions. This objective is to be pursued through analysis, capacity-building and support of policy dialogue (by developing linkages between grass-roots organizations, national institutions and rural stakeholders).

Following from the COSOP, the RER/SAMRIDDHI project (2015-2022) includes a number of policy engagement activities. The development objective is that viable rural micro and small enterprises (RMSEs), in both farming and off-farming sectors, provide sustainable sources of income to poor households, migrant families and returnees. Component 3 of the project aims at promoting a favourable policy and institutional environment and providing capacity-building support. The project promotes RMSEs and migration policy development by enhancing the capacity of national stakeholders to represent their interests. One of the expected outcomes is the creation of a multistakeholder platform, incorporating government

institutions, civil society organizations and private-sector stakeholders. Investments of the project subcomponent 3.1 (Policy and Institutional Development) cover policy studies on how to solve issues affecting the development of RMSEs. The subcomponent also comprises capacity-building for institutions that have a role in creating a conducive environment for micro and small enterprises and for migrants' reintegration. Further, it includes the creation of a multistakeholder platform on migration and development that will provide a venue for policy dialogue – and a space to develop policy measures aimed at facilitating migrant reintegration and the promotion of their economic initiatives. Both the 2013 COSOP and the RER/SAMRIDDHI project are consistent with CPE's recommendations, because (i) they enhance cooperation with and participation by civil society in policy; and (ii) the project's policy activities are consistent with the policy agenda set by the COSOP.

Lessons learned

The effectiveness of country-level policy engagement before 2012 was modest owing to an unspecified agenda, a limited quantity of dedicated resources, and a highly fluid and uncertain national context. IFAD's policy engagement in Nepal has become more significant since 2012 by creating synergies between the country strategy and the lending programme, and ensuring that the project contains a core component on policy. In the 2013 COSOP and 2015 RER/SAMRIDDHI project, policy components play a central role and should produce concrete results. The modalities of policy engagement in Nepal are capacity-building, creating space for policy dialogue, enhancing capacity of national stakeholders to participate in national policymaking, and financing policy analysis. In particular, capacity-building of institutions involved in project realization is key in order to further facilitate the implementation of other policy engagement activities, such as creating space for policy dialogue. In fact, enhanced institutional capacity can translate into a greater capacity to intervene in policy consultations and policymaking. The RER/SAMRIDDHI experience shows that policy reform is facilitated when projects are able to demonstrate the positive impact of a policy change and key stakeholders cooperate to pursue the opportunity for policy reform.

Where to go for more information

- CPE 2012, COSOP 2013, RER/SAMRIDDHI 2015.

4.3 Ghana Agriculture Sector Investment Programme (GASIP): An overview of IFAD's policy engagement into project lending in Ghana

Summary

IFAD funding: Loan of US\$71.6 million, grant of US\$500,000.

Key objectives: To contribute to sustainable poverty reduction in rural Ghana and enhance the profitability and climate change resilience of agribusinesses, including smallholders. The GASIP aims at creating space for policy dialogue among national stakeholders, scaling up, and enhancing the operationalization of national policies at the local level.

Lessons and successes: GASIP represents a step forward with respect to IFAD's policy engagement into project lending in Ghana, which often had overoptimistic expectations regarding the implementation capacities of government agencies and failed to produce efficient results. Through the GASIP, IFAD has improved the policy framework for smallholder farmers, promoted regulation in rural finance, and offered significant policy support to the government while seeking to include different actors in the policy dialogue.

Introduction

This case study is designed to provide an overview of IFAD's work in Ghana from 1998 to the present. It will do so by tracing the evolution of policy engagement processes in the COSOPs and pertaining projects. Up to 2012, IFAD financed projects for the total amount of US\$225 million.

Specific policy context

Ghana is the largest recipient of IFAD loans and grants in the West and Central Africa region. The country went through a phase of economic growth starting from the 1980s, when the Economic Recovery Programme helped Ghana to become one of the strongest economic performers in Africa. After nearly three decades of significant economic growth, Ghana attained middle-income status in 2011. Despite this economic success, poverty reduction has slowed down in recent years, especially in northern Ghana. Poverty reduction through agricultural growth was the main objective of the 1998 COSOP strategy. Ghana is divided into 10 administrative regions comprising 170 districts, each one with a district assembly that consists of empowered legislative, planning, budgeting and service-delivery authorities. Both on a local and national level, the government has shown to be dedicated to rural poverty reduction and willing to work with IFAD.

IFAD engagement

IFAD engagement in country-level policy has been part of IFAD's agenda since at least the 1998 COSOP. The projects designed under this COSOP focused on creating an enabling regulatory environment (Upper East Region Land Conservation and Smallholder Rehabilitation Project – II; Rural Financial Services Project, RFSP), supporting decentralization (Northern Region Poverty Reduction Programme), and strengthening regulations regarding rural finance (Rural Enterprises Project Phase II – REP II). These actions were consistent with the COSOP's objectives of promoting enabling regulatory frameworks, enhancing district management capacity, and allowing private-sector access to rural markets. In addition, some projects such as RFSP, the Root and Tuber Improvement and Marketing Programme and REP II had countrywide coverage. The projects designed under the 2006 COSOP aimed at creating space for policy dialogue among national stakeholders. In addition to enhancing rural finance (Northern Rural Growth Programme [NRGP]; Rural and Agricultural Finance Programme [RAFIP]), these projects focus on commodity chain governance (NRGP) and establishing

opportunities for consultation among private and public actors (NRGP). Lastly, the only project implemented under the latest 2012 COSOP is the Ghana Agriculture Sector Investment Programme (GASIP). The GASIP, in accordance with the policy objectives of the COSOP, aims at creating space for policy dialogue among national stakeholders, scaling up, and enhancing the operationalization of national policies at the local level. The programme offers policy support to enable a regulatory framework for smallholders to participate in agricultural value chains and aims at building partnerships with apex organizations to contribute to major agricultural policy initiatives.

An IFAD country office was opened in Accra in 2010, which allowed IFAD to expand its policy engagement activities through the outposted CPM (since 2011). IFAD currently co-chairs the Agriculture Sector Working Group, which serves as a policy forum and makes recommendations to the government for policy action.

Outcomes

Although projects in Ghana have contained policy engagement since at least the 1998 COSOP, in recent years the policy component of the projects has acquired more importance. Starting from the 2006 COSOP, IFAD's objectives increasingly aligned with the government's policy, which has resulted in an increased attention to institutional development and policy dialogue. The country programme evaluation (CPE) assessed the relevance of IFAD-supported programmes and projects as moderately satisfactory. In accordance with both IFAD's and Ghana's goals, the portfolio has evolved from geographically targeted projects to sectoral programmes, covering larger regions or the entire country. The coverage of policy issues has consequently expanded to a larger area, which led to reduced investments in the Upper West, the poorest region of the country. Limitations to the success of the projects have been the overoptimistic expectations regarding the implementation capacities of government agencies and partners (especially in engaging with the private sector) and the lack of efficient monitoring and evaluation systems.

Despite this, poverty reduction has successfully been targeted through the implementation of rural finance policy components. These provided profitable tools to smallholder farmers to access the market, such as matching grants in the REP II, NRGF and RAFIP (ongoing projects). For example, REP II managed to establish linkages between licensed buying agents and regional/national associations for assisting micro and small enterprises (MSEs), create mechanisms of assistance with district assemblies, strengthen the rural banks, and establish the credit guarantee scheme to minimize the risk of lending to the MSE sector. In the case of NRGF and RAFIP, a space for policy dialogue has been created, especially through private and public stakeholders. Examples are the value chain practitioners' forum in NRGF and the agricultural sector groups in RAFIP. Through the GASIP, IFAD has improved the policy framework for smallholder farmers and offered significant policy support to the government.

Lessons learned

There are four ongoing IFAD projects in Ghana: REP II, NRGF, RAFIP and GASIP. All of these projects include rural finance policy components that aim at improving the regulatory regime for microfinance. REP II contributes to the creation of a more efficient and transparent tax regime, which avoids double taxation and provides initiatives for MSEs, in addition to establishing relevant connections among local and national financial institutions. NRGF and RAFIP also are attempting to create policy dialogue through forums of key stakeholders in the rural finance sector. The most recent of these projects, GASIP, builds on the approaches of the earlier ones by drawing different actors into the processes of policy dialogue and creating opportunities for policy dialogue among the various stakeholders.

Where to go for more information

- 2014-2015 West and Central Asia portfolio, 2012 CPE, 2012 COSOP.

4.4 Rural Adelante, El Salvador: Building extensive policy engagement into project lending

Summary

IFAD funding: US\$67 million.

Key objectives: To reduce rural poverty in El Salvador by increasing the income of rural families living in poverty, and supporting adaptation of climate change. The policy engagement objective of the project is strengthening the public policies framework to create, in a sustainable and inclusive way, a more favourable environment for rural development.

Lessons and successes: Although the project has not yet been implemented, the policy-related component hopes to influence policies related to production across at least five value chains, to climate change resistance, to the application of the national youth strategy, and to the more effective inclusion of women and indigenous peoples in the policy framework, and aims to assist in the implementation of policies at the municipal level and through national institutions. The project design process demonstrates that IFAD's policy engagement can be built into loan projects to suit the needs and interests of a variety of different national and local stakeholders.

Introduction

IFAD has accumulated considerable experience over nearly three decades of work and cooperation in El Salvador, and has contributed directly and indirectly to the mobilization of resources for removing structural obstacles to rural transformation. The National Programme of Rural Economic Transformation for Living Well – Rural Adelante (*Programa Nacional de Transformación Económica Rural para el Buen Vivir ∞ Rural Adelante*) is the result of the ongoing dialogue between IFAD and the government (through the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock) to define priorities that align IFAD's strategy with government priorities and policies for implementation.

Specific policy context

El Salvador is a lower middle-income country. In recent decades, El Salvador has undergone intense institutional and economic changes caused in part by the economic globalization of trade and monetary policy (the adoption of the United States dollar as the national currency in 2001), and the concordant increase of migratory flows to the United States of America and the inflow of remittances. El Salvador has become an urban country. In 2013, its total population was 6.3 million people, 37.8 per cent of whom were living in rural areas; another 3 million Salvadoreans are estimated to live in the United States of America. In that year, 51 per cent of the rural population were women; and the indigenous population, only recently recognized formally and legally by the government, accounted for 0.2 per cent of the total population.

Poverty in El Salvador decreased between 2000 and 2013, with the proportion of impoverished households falling from 38.8 per cent to 29.6 per cent during the period. This trend was mainly the result of reductions in rural poverty, which dropped by nearly 18 per cent, from 53.7 per cent to 36.0 per cent over the same period. Poverty particularly affects vulnerable segments of the population, such as indigenous peoples, children, youth, women and older people: 38 per cent of rural young people aged 18-35 years live in poverty, while 42 per cent of rural women are poor. The vast majority of indigenous peoples live in poverty. Since 2009, the Government of El Salvador has been implementing policies to support the agriculture sector, including new social programmes that have benefited the rural poor in particular. In 2011, the government launched the Plan for Family Farming, which is the main public policy instrument for boosting agricultural production and productivity and improving the well-being of poor rural families.

Although spending in rural areas by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and other ministries increased slightly during the period 2001-2013 – agriculture’s share in total GDP was sustained at about 10 per cent over the period – it remains low for a country in which much of the poor population is concentrated in rural areas. Climate change and increasing climatic variability are among the biggest challenges for Salvadoran agriculture. El Salvador is one of the world’s most vulnerable countries to extreme events. Recurrent droughts, particularly in the so-called “dry corridor”, result in losses, especially for smallholder grain producers.

IFAD engagement

The National Programme of Rural Economic Transformation for Living Well – Rural Adelante (*Programa Nacional de Transformación Económica Rural para el Buen Vivir ∞ Rural Adelante*) is the national programme approved in 2015 with an extension to be approved in 2016. The development objective of Rural Adelante is to reduce rural poverty in El Salvador by increasing the income of rural families living in poverty and supporting adaptation of climate change. The project contains some innovative elements, namely: (i) market demand as the guiding element for the development of rural businesses around selected value chains; (ii) strengthening of the public policies framework to create, in a sustainable and inclusive way, a more favourable environment for economic development; (iii) strengthening the capacity of public institutions and productive organizations to ensure the continuity of actions beyond the end of the programme; and (iv) the adoption of an approach for the protection of natural resources, the environment and climate change adaptation.

One of the project’s components aims to strengthen the public policy framework for rural development. It takes a three-pronged approach in line with the rest of the project by jointly focusing on economic sustainability (through work on identifying and ameliorating regulatory barriers to value chains and strengthening the capacity of rural people to participate in policy discussions); environmental sustainability (by supporting the implementation of the national climate change strategy at the municipal level); and social inclusion (by assisting the government to formulate and apply strategies focused on women, youth and indigenous peoples). The project will work with sections of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock focused on policy and planning; the National Youth Institute (INJUVE, using its Spanish acronym); municipalities; producer organizations; and rural youth, women and indigenous populations (and their existing networks for political and policy discourse).

The needs of rural producers and organizations will be included through their participation in discussion forums focused on value chain coordination, which will focus on both economic/commercial issues and policy issues. The project also aims to strengthen the capacity of women, rural youth and indigenous peoples’ organizations to participate in public policy cycles.

Lessons learned

While the project has not yet been implemented, the project design process demonstrated that there are significant entry points for policy engagement in a project dedicated to a sustainable value chain based approach, and that policy engagement can be built into loan projects to suit the needs and interests of a variety of different national and local stakeholders. More specifically, the small policy-related component, which represented a small percentage of the project budget, hopes to influence policies related to production across at least five value chains, to climate change resistance, to the application of the national youth strategy, and to the more effective inclusion of women and indigenous peoples in the policy framework. Beyond simply commissioning policy research, the project aims to assist in the implementation of policies at the municipal level (working directly with communities) and through national institutions like INJUVE.

The work will be coordinated by a central member of staff working just on the policy components of the project, and supplemented by specialist consultants working within national institutions (Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and INJUVE) on climate change, women, youth and indigenous peoples. Thus, it is hoped that this team of four policy specialists and the policy coordinator will be able not only to build and implement strategies together with government, but also to augment capacity in national institutions to actualize policy while simultaneously enhancing the capacity of local actors to participate in policy dialogue. It aims to incorporate these actors into existing policy dialogue forums – some of which IFAD has actively supported through its previous projects and grants policy in El Salvador – rather than creating new forums, in order to enhance the sustainability of the project and ensure that policy engagement is taken up at the national level.

Where to go for more information

- Rural Adelante – Project Design Report; and El Salvador COSOP 2015.

4.5 Latin American policy dialogue grants: comparing the Commission on Family Farming (REAF)/Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and the rural dialogue groups (RDGs)

Summary

Key objectives: The overall objective of these initiatives is to boost policy dialogue in order to produce policies or strategies to overcome rural poverty in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. On the one hand, IFAD-MERCOSUR grants specifically target legislation and approaches to family farming, focusing on agricultural activities as an answer to rural poverty. On the other hand, the rural dialogue groups (RDGs) focus on highlighting rural poverty and development analysis/proposals in the national political agendas.

Lessons and successes: The RDGs have been successful in drafting proposals, strategic plans and recommendations that were later adopted or used as guidelines to design public policies, which contributed to the prioritization of agriculture and rural issues in the public agenda of each country.

In addition, the RDGs often managed to create strategic alliances with relevant actors from the public and private sectors, thus improving the RDGs' capacity of influencing policymaking processes. Over the years, REAF has been able to reach a political definition of the category of family farming, in addition to increasing the capacity and participation of family farming organizations in the region. The programme created a series of national registries of family farmers as a basis for the design and application of targeted policies, and promoted new opportunities for horizontal cooperation among policy dialogue stakeholders, both within MERCOSUR and in other regions. One of the most significant policy achievements of IFAD-MERCOSUR is the adoption of recommendations produced by REAF in the bloc's member and associate countries.

Introduction

In Latin America and the Caribbean, a region where the majority of countries have achieved middle-income status and significant public budgets are allocated to poverty reduction, demand for IFAD services is no longer limited to the loans it offers. In this context, policy engagement is a key element for scaling up development models matured over time by IFAD-supported projects, as well as enhancing the sustainability of project-supported development initiatives by aligning investment projects with poverty reduction policies. In fact, IFAD has

been promoting public policy engagement in Latin America, and particularly supporting policy dialogue on issues related to family farming and rural development for at least 15 years.

Since 2000, IFAD has supported the creation and strengthening of the regional IFAD-MERCOSUR programme that promotes dialogue between organizations representing family farmers and beneficiaries of IFAD projects with government officials in the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) countries. This allowed the actors to identify, agree on and articulate public policies for family farming and resulted in the creation, in 2004, of the Commission on Family Farming (REAF) and MERCOSUR's Fund for Family Farming, now both entirely funded by MERCOSUR governments.

But policy engagement within the grant portfolio of the Latin American and the Caribbean region is not defined only by this effort, or this approach. Another major initiative has been undertaken with the support of the International Development Research Centre, which aims at raising the profile of policies aimed at rural development and family farming in the region under the grant entitled "Knowledge for Change in Rural Poverty and Development". The project's main objective was to establish a mechanism for policy dialogue that would contribute to improve strategies, policies, and national and subnational investment targeting rural poverty in Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador and Mexico in order to highlight rural poverty and development analysis and proposals in the national political agenda of these countries.

The purpose of this case study is to outline the similarities and differences between these two approaches. While both used regional IFAD grants, and utilized the promotion and support of policy dialogue among stakeholders as the primary means of policy engagement, one took a "regional-first" approach by targeting dialogue among national governments, while one took a "national-first" approach by building a loosely affiliated set of national-level groups, each with characteristics required to match national conditions.

Context

Despite recent progress in income equality and poverty reduction, rural poverty in Latin America persists, and nearly half of the rural population still lives in poverty and about a third in extreme poverty. Approximately 37 million people in the Latin America and the Caribbean region are estimated to suffer from hunger. Poverty and hunger are more likely to impact rural areas, where people are four times more likely to suffer from extreme poverty compared with their urban counterparts. The majority of rural people in the region depend on agriculture for sustenance, and the most common form of agriculture in the area is family farming. Despite this, a large portion of the rural population does not farm or does not rely on agricultural activity as its principal source of income. Small-scale family farms constitute more than 80 per cent of farms in the region and involve the work of 60 million people – in Central America, about a third of the local workers. Small-scale farmers also have a significant role in food security: in some countries, they cover over half of the local food production.

Family farming refers to the practice of an economic activity, agriculture, by a social group united by ties of kinship. This social group works and generates products, goods and services. In defining family farming within the rural landscape, the focus is exclusively on agricultural establishments in rural areas that employ chiefly family labour. The largest group of family farms in Latin America is specialized family farms (SFF), defined as the number of independent or self-employed workers and highly dependent upon income from agricultural activity. A smaller group is composed of multi-activity family farms, households for which agriculture is not the only source of income.

Despite the importance of family farms in Latin America, agriculture in the region is dualized, with large commercial farms oriented towards the production of commodities and export dominating the bulk of land and agriculture revenue. Policy frameworks traditionally tended

to ignore these small family producers. IFAD has worked, utilizing its grant programme, to increase the profile of family farming and rural development in the portfolios of ministries of agriculture and other actors.

REAF and MERCOSUR – accomplishments

At the beginning of IFAD's involvement with MERCOSUR in the early 2000s, the term family farming was not yet used much in Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, the idea that IFAD should support policy dynamics rather than finance territorial development was a novelty. At the time, support for small producers was based on compensatory and welfare policies, restricted in both cases to specific interventions with no nationwide or subnational projection. These policies geared exclusively to mitigating the effects of market trends, in view of the lack of public policies to regulate the competitive conditions faced by smaller and weaker family production units. During this period, projects funded by IFAD were executed by governments with the very limited or symbolic participation of producers' organizations. Additionally, there were no public institutions specializing in the problems of small peasant and family farming.

It was under the leadership of Brazil that family farming began to be recognized as a category in the subregion, thus initiating a paradigm shift in the design of public policies for investment in the economic and social development of rural areas. In 2003, many Latin American governments followed Brazil's lead and acknowledged IFAD's role as a facilitator, and a decision was taken to form a specialized ad hoc group for governments and organizations to analyse, jointly, issues related to family farming. This new, open environment facilitated the cooperation between Latin American governments.

The MERCOSUR Common Market Group formally approved the creation of the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF) in 2004, thus creating an area for the coordination of policy dialogue between governments and organizations of the expanded MERCOSUR countries. The REAF is composed of the governments of the state parties and civil society organizations representing family farming. IFAD's two grants to the REAF, which ran from 2005 to 2012, provided technical and financial support to REAF through the Regional Coordination Unit of MERCOSUR. Since 2011, IFAD's support has been reduced and is no longer the primary source of funding for the REAF, which is now led by MERCOSUR member states.

Nonetheless, in 2012, IFAD approved a new grant to ensure the continuity of the IFAD-MERCOSUR programme, this time to the Latin American Centre for Human Economy (CLAEH). This decision was driven by the need of REAF to adopt a more national approach, rather than the regional approach of its early days. In the new stage, governments were expected to provide commitment and support to the REAF, both politically and economically. This meant that the responsibilities previously devolving upon the IFAD-MERCOSUR programme were now to be taken up by the individual states. IFAD's grant to CLAEH was approved in order to advance with regard to these new challenges. The role of the IFAD-MERCOSUR CLAEH programme was to address the needs of the REAF by providing financial, technical and methodological support to REAF stakeholders. The programme supported the governments and family farming organizations (OAFs) in each country in the execution of their IFAD projects and in the implementation of policies arising from MERCOSUR resolutions and decisions, in response to REAF's recommendations. In 2014, IFAD approved a new grant to CLAEH for the period 2015-2018, starting a new phase of the programme.

IFAD's principal contribution to the development of REAF was to ensure the necessary financial support to establish the conditions and ensure the continuity of a small and flexible structure, a work method, an active agenda and the strong participation of OAFs. Over the years, REAF has achieved public and political visibility, as well as having been able to reach a

political definition of the category of family farming. These results made it possible to create a series of national registries of family farmers as a basis for the design and application of targeted policies, the Family Farming Registries. They also contributed to the production of a joint analysis of public policies and their instruments by both the governments and OAFs of the countries in the region in order to make adjustments and proposals that can become recommendations to be submitted to MERCOSUR. The contribution of REAF to MERCOSUR included providing recommendations, which were consequently adopted by the bloc's member and associate countries. Among them were the design and implementation of new funding instruments (financial trusts, certificates of deposit and microcredit mechanisms), the development of regional programmes (the Regional Programme for the Training of Young Rural Leaders, the Regional Programme for Gender Equity in Family Farming and the Regional Programme for Public Purchases), and the creation of the Family Funding Fund. In addition, in 2010, the ministries responsible for family farming in MERCOSUR signed a declaration within the framework of REAF, undertaking to work on promoting access to public purchases for family farming. Although the recommendation about land policies did not achieve the status of a resolution, it did result in the adoption of new regulations in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. Lastly, the REAF managed to promote new opportunities for horizontal cooperation among policy dialogue stakeholders, both within MERCOSUR and in other regions (especially Africa).

Rural dialogue groups – accomplishments

The “Knowledge for Change in Rural Poverty and Development” project seeks to contribute to the creation of policies, strategies and investments focusing on overcoming rural poverty in Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador and Mexico. The main policy engagement activity promoted by the project is the creation of rural dialogue groups (RDGs), which use dialogue as an influential strategy to push for the inclusion of rural issues in the public agenda. Each country's RDG implements its own dialogue strategy depending on its different national realities, contingencies and scenarios. The composition of the group ranges from academics and representatives from the private sector, to non-governmental organizations, government authorities, consultants and politicians. An Executive Secretary coordinates each RDG, a member who is strictly connected to – and recognized by – the government and the various political coalitions of the country.

The first RDGs were created in Ecuador and Colombia in 2010, followed by Mexico and El Salvador in 2011. In creating space for policy dialogue, RDGs have strategically worked to involve the government in multiple ways. In some cases, such as Mexico, the RDG has created synergies with rural development committees in the Senate and the House, in addition to other national institutions from a variety of sectors. Similarly, in Colombia, the RDG has created alliances and collaborations with Colombia's rural institutions, including private-sector and social organizations, and invited experts to discuss relevant issues.

The outcomes produced by the RDGs vary according to the characteristics of RDG contributions in each country. Proposals, strategic plans and recommendations written by the RDGs were adopted – or used as guidelines to design public policies – in every country in which the RDGs were operational. For example, the RDG El Salvador designed a proposal for methodological tools to evaluate the impact of public policies on rural territories, which was then adopted in the FOMILENIO II project. In Colombia, the RDG contributed to the drafting of the Land and Rural Development Law by providing recommendations on income generation in rural communities. Another result of the IFAD policy engagement strategy through the RDGs is the prioritization of agriculture and rural issues in the public agenda of each country. This is especially true for Ecuador, where the RDG meetings hosted in several occasions high-ranking officers from the ministries of Agriculture, Social Development Coordination and Economic

Policy Coordination, as well as the National Ministry of Planning and Development. Furthermore, the RDGs often managed to create strategic alliances with relevant actors, which improved the RDGs' capacity of influencing policymaking processes. For instance, the RDG in Mexico created connections with the leaders of the National Forum for Building a Food and Nutritional Policy (FONAN), and the RDG in El Salvador established an alliance with the Permanent Board of Actors in Bajo Lempa.

Comparing IFAD-MERCOSUR and the rural dialogue groups

IFAD's grants to REAF/MERCOSUR – then CLAEH/MERCOSUR – and IFAD-financed RDGs have similar features. The overall objective of these initiatives was to boost policy dialogue in order to produce policies or strategies to overcome rural poverty in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. Nevertheless, the grants had slightly different objectives. IFAD-MERCOSUR grants specifically targeted legislation and approaches to family farming, thus focusing on agricultural activities as an answer to rural poverty. Agricultural issues were relevant working topics in the RDGs as well; however, they were not identified as the only solutions to overcome rural poverty.

Another difference between IFAD-MERCOSUR and the RDGs consists in their different approach to policy engagement. IFAD-MERCOSUR operated according to a "regional first" approach, working with the MERCOSUR governments in order to propose regional-wide solutions regarding family farming. On the contrary, the RDGs adopted a "national first" approach and targeted four countries, applying different strategies according to each country's national context. Additionally, the two initiatives differ in the strategies adopted for engaging governments. IFAD-MERCOSUR mainly engaged in broad strategies, working with the national ministries of the MERCOSUR governments to create a policy framework amenable to concerns of family farming. Both in its initial phase – in which REAF was funded by IFAD through the Regional Coordination Unit of MERCOSUR – and in the CLAEH phase, IFAD-MERCOSUR initiatives were managed by governments and ministries. On the other hand, although the RDGs established significant synergies with national ministries, they especially involved stakeholders from the civil society sector, and the objectives in terms of core legislation were not as uniform.

Where to go for more information

- Family Farming in Latin America – A New Comparative Analysis;
- From Vision to Action – IFAD's Contribution to the Institutionalization and Political Visibility of Family Farming in the Expanded MERCOSUR; and
- Knowledge for Change in Rural Poverty and Development 2010/2013.

4.6 Action plan for policy engagement in Bangladesh

Summary

Key objectives: To provide a framework for IFAD to better support and contribute to national policy processes in Bangladesh through the preparation of a report that would: (i) review the current and planned country programme and identify its operational and policy-related successes; (ii) review the national policy framework and key policies relevant to those thematic areas covered by the IFAD country programme; (iii) identify potential opportunities and entry points for IFAD to support in national policy processes; and (iv) draw up an action plan for policy engagement as part of the IFAD country programme.

Lessons and successes: The exercise offered important insights into the opportunities for policy engagement that exists in the Bangladesh country programme that would not otherwise have been identified, let alone exploited.

Introduction

IFAD's country programme in Bangladesh is governed by the 2012-2018 COSOP, which has three main objectives; a focus on climate change adaptation, value chains and empowerment of marginalized groups. Within the country programme, there are five ongoing projects: the Participatory Small-scale Water Resources Sector Project; the Char Development and Settlement Project IV; the Haor Infrastructure and Livelihood Improvement Project (HILIP) – Climate Adaptation and Livelihood Protection (CALIP); the Coastal Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project (CCRIP); and the Promoting Agricultural Commercialization and Enterprises (PACE) project. These are complemented by a variety of non-lending activities, a strong focus on knowledge management and engagement in national processes of policy dialogue. Here, IFAD has contributed on a number of policy issues, such as land titling, access to waterbodies, market management and gender. It also regularly participates in the agriculture and water management working groups that provide a forum for government and its development partners to meet.

Specific policy context

A 2015 country programme evaluation conducted by IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation called for increased levels of policy and institutional support in Bangladesh. It argued that, to push for more lasting and longer term reform in policies and legislation, IFAD needs to engage more proactively with the ministries at the central level, enabling it to be a partner in wider national policy processes and contribute towards shaping them. It specifically recommended: *"broadening policy dialogue and institutional support so that the best pro-poor practices developed through IFAD funded projects are better captured and disseminated in the country"*.

IFAD engagement

As a first step in responding to this recommendation, the CPM for Bangladesh identified the need to conduct further analysis. He drew up terms of reference for a consultancy study, whose overall objective would be to provide a framework for IFAD to better support and contribute to national policy processes in Bangladesh. This would be achieved through the preparation of a report that would: (i) review the current and planned country programme and identify its operational and policy-related successes; (ii) review the national policy framework and key policies relevant to those thematic areas covered by the IFAD country programme; (iii) identify potential opportunities and entry points for IFAD to support in national policy processes; and (iv) draw up an action plan for policy engagement as part of the IFAD country programme.

The 30-day consultancy was carried out by a Bangladeshi consultant familiar with IFAD and the country programme. It comprised the following major steps: (i) a review of all relevant project documents, especially design and supervision reports, project completion reports, impact studies, publications on success stories, issue papers, etc.; (ii) in-depth discussions with present and former project directors and technical experts to pin down the issues that could be replicated and promoted for policy reforms; (iii) meetings with key officials in a number of government departments and regulatory agencies; (iv) identification of non-governmental organizations, research and advocacy agencies as possible partners for advocacy; (v) a presentation to the Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance; and (vi) finalization of the report by incorporating suggestions from the ongoing projects.

Outcomes

The report was structured as an Action Plan for Policy Engagement. It identified a total of 15 operational- and policy-related successes under the currently ongoing projects that could potentially provide the basis for a policy engagement. For each one, it also defined a plan for policy engagement, comprising the outcome sought, the activities that would contribute to the outcome's achievement, and the responsibility (or responsibilities) for moving the policy agenda forward.

Box 1 provides an example of one of the 15 policy engagement plans.

In most cases, the policy outcomes sought were very specific: for example, "to develop an official written road selection and construction policy that is aligned with the Government plan for sustainable rural road development and applied across the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) irrespective of financiers", or "informed policy decision by the Government, PKSF and donor agencies about how to finance sustainable micro-finance programmes". In some cases, achieving the outcomes would require approval from the agencies that are currently implementing the projects, such as LGED and the government-created organization Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF). Others would need approval from the line ministry and other ministries to be adopted as national policies.

The activities required to achieve the outcomes differ case by case depending on the complexity of the issue and the number of agencies involved; however, a broadly common approach to the activities comprised the following steps: (i) detailed documentation of operational and policy-related successes by the projects; (ii) preparation of a policy paper with recommendations for proposed changes in policy, practices and regulations, etc.; (iii) dissemination of the policy issues through workshops, seminars, advocacy meetings, etc.; (iv) development of a support network for acting in favour of the changes; and (v) continued lobbying until the policies and practices are adopted.

The overall action plan groups the 15 policy engagement plans under seven thematic areas, reflecting the major areas of support under the IFAD-supported projects: (i) rural communication infrastructure; (ii) rural market development; (iii) natural resource management; (iv) climate change adaptation; (v) agriculture and non-farm business sector; (vi) new financial product development; and (vii) integrated area development (distribution of land for resettlement). Table 1 lists the 15 topics, along with the project responsible for undertaking the policy engagement activities and the final approving ministry or authority.

Lessons learned

The preparation of the action plan proved to be a relatively low-cost exercise (30 days of consultancy time), yet the exercise offered important insights into the opportunities for policy engagement that exist in the Bangladesh country programme that would not otherwise have been identified, let alone exploited.

BOX 1 Example of policy engagement plan

Issue B.1: Development and design of rural markets

Brief description (highlights): One of the most important development interventions that contributed to agricultural development by facilitating efficient buying and selling of farm products is the improvement in rural markets and connecting them through paved roads with larger markets or towns. The local government engineering department (LGED), under different projects, has developed many rural markets with very basic infrastructure: the recently completed Market Infrastructure Development Project in Charland Region (MIDPCR) developed 66 markets, and the ongoing Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project (CCRIP) and the Haor Infrastructure and Livelihood Improvement Project (HILIP) plan to develop about nearly 400 markets. One limitation is that LGED only develops markets that have (state-owned) land and/or private owners donate land for development. In addition, the planning, design and construction process at times differs from project to project with suboptimal results. For example, the selection criteria and process for markets for development, the preparation of a master plan for each market, the involvement or clearance from the (local) administration, the number and type of infrastructure in each market vary greatly and are sometimes due to donors' preference and sometimes due to the absence of written policies and so forth. Therefore, a uniform policy document for rural market development by LGED is overdue.

Outcome: The outcome will be a clearer strategy for public investments in rural markets for catalysing rural economic growth. It will also identify and recommend various sets of infrastructure appropriate for different rural settings.

Activities: The following activities are recommended: (i) document impacts of rural markets developed and planned under IFAD-funded projects, mainly under MIDPCR, CCRIP and HILIP; (ii) develop a policy paper along with recommendations spelling out criteria, selection process and implementation of market development projects; (iii) prepare a manual for planning, designing and constructing infrastructure for rural markets; (iv) formally adopt/approve policies and manual by LGED; (v) digitize master plan and other information for future development; and (vi) disseminate policies and manual within all levels of LGED.

Responsibility: The CCRIP will execute the above-mentioned activities with assistance from HILIP. It may seek short-term external assistance for this purpose.

For the managers of the current projects, the study provided specific policy opportunities to be pursued, and road maps of how best to pursue them; and it also enabled them to understand the link between their day-to-day project work and a larger agenda for achieving sustainable development outcomes.

More broadly, the action plan shows that project implementation can frequently create the basis for policy engagement: what is critical is to identify and draw out the lessons learned – ideally this should be done through the knowledge management function of the project, but where needed, such external studies can be an invaluable approach to analyse the opportunities.

One additional element that might be considered in carrying out similar exercises in the future would be to gain a better understanding of the political likelihood of each thing happening by assessing the interests at stake in favour and against policy engagement on the issues. The approach would thus be to identify and formulate a policy agenda on the basis of what has worked well, but prior to implementing it, analysing the politics, policy and power in each individual case.

Table 1: Summary of policy action plans

	Thematic areas and issues	Lead project for policy initiative	Approving ministry or agency
A	Rural communication infrastructure		
A.1	Successful engagement of labour contracting societies for construction and maintenance of minor communication and other infrastructure	HILIP	LGED
A.2	Vegetative protection of slopes of rural roads, bridge bases, minor embankments, sides of canals, earth mounts, beel embankments, etc.	CALIP, CCRIP	LGED
A.3	Appropriate choice for various village communication infrastructure (reinforced cement concrete roads, bituminous roads and block roads)	CCRIP	LGED
B	Rural market development for rural economic growth		
B.1	Development and design of rural markets	CCRIP	LGED/LGD
B.2	Management of rural markets by market management committees	CCRIP	LGED/LGD
C	Sustainable natural resource management		
C.1	Development of sustainable beel (small waterbody) management	HILIP	Min. of Land
D	Mitigation of adverse impact of climate change in haor areas		
D.1	Vegetative and low-cost protection of villages in haor areas	CALIP/HILIP	LGED
D.2	Application of safe chemical treatment techniques of bamboo to enhance longevity	CALIP/HILIP	LGED
E	Agriculture/agribusiness and non-farm microenterprise sector		
E.1	Market orientation of agriculture and agribusiness promotion	PACE	PKSF, IFAD
E.2	Promotion of non-farm microenterprises through value chain development	PACE	PKSF, IFAD
E.3	Sector-specific policy issues (for example, livestock, fisheries, etc.)	PACE	PKSF, IFAD
F	New financial products and services		
F.1	New loan products: lease finance and start-up loans	PACE	PKSF, NGOs, Micro-Credit Regulatory Authority (MRA)
F.2	Livestock insurance combined with animal health services	PACE	MOF, insurance regulator
F.3	Institutional arrangement for sustainable delivery of financial services to the poor	PACE	IFAD, GoB
G	Integrated vulnerable area development		
G.1	Systematic distribution of <i>khas</i> land for rehabilitation to the landless poor for poverty reduction	CDSP-IV	MOL

4.7 Identifying policy issues affecting the rural micro- and small-enterprise sector in Ghana

Under the Rural Enterprises Programme (REP), the consultancy firm KPMG was engaged to conduct a series of studies to inform the mid-term review of the programme. One of these was a review of policy issues affecting the rural micro- and small-enterprise sector. This was achieved by:

- Reviewing the existing policy issues that affect the micro and small enterprise (MSE) development in rural areas.
- Pooling a statistically sound sample of rural MSEs and district-based business advisory centres (BACs) to come out with a list of policy issues that affect the rural MSE sector.
- Consulting with relevant stakeholders to validate the key issues that affect the establishment and growth of rural MSEs by:
 - identifying the extent to which each of the identified issues affect the MSE development in the rural areas;
 - ranking the issues based on urgency and the extent to which they affect the establishment and growth of MSEs in the rural area together with the key stakeholders; and
 - identifying clear, concrete and relevant areas of the rural MSE sector in Ghana that could benefit from a policy dialogue for further consideration by the mid-term.

The consultants conducted interviews with: (i) chief executives and senior officials from key support organizations to determine the supply side priority policy cluster and inherent challenges affecting the development of MSEs, as well as the required policy interventions for overcoming the challenges; and (ii) BACs, local business associations and MSEs. On the basis of these two different yet complementary sets of perspectives, priority policy clusters, the challenges for each policy cluster and the required policy interventions were identified. These are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Rural MSEs in Ghana: priority policy clusters, challenges and required policy interventions

Policy cluster	Challenges	Policy interventions
1. Provision of finance for micro and small enterprise (MSE) development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local financial institutions are unwilling to lend to MSEs due to inadequate capacity to handle MSEs, including lack of understanding agricultural financing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen rural banks and establish the credit guarantee scheme and other lending packages that minimize the risk of lending to the MSE sector.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unharmonized donor and government funds in relation to credit policies and procedures, leading to market distortion in terms of interest rates, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmonize donor and government policies and procedures with respect to interest rates and other costs of borrowing by MSEs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate capacity for licensed buying agents (LBAs) to operate as rotating and accumulating savings and credit associations (ROSCAs) for enhancing savings and on-lending to MSEs and intermediation with local banks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen LBAs to operate as ROSCAs for enhancing savings and on-lending to MSEs and intermediation with local banks.
2. Creating an enabling environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumbersome legal regulatory environment that requires MSEs to comply with taxation, licensing and business registration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the taxation and licensing system to create a more efficient and transparent tax regime, which avoids double taxation and provides initiatives for MSEs. Decentralize business registration to district assemblies.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumbersome and costly licensing and business registration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline the licensing procedures and decentralize registration procedures to establish a one-stop registration centre at regional and district levels.
3. Technology and product development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most MSEs are either unfamiliar with new technologies or cannot afford to access an appropriate level of technology and modern methods of production, which leads to lower level of productivity and production of poor-quality products. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial incentives to encourage private-sector firms to provide subcontracting and franchising of technologies with MSEs. Establish quality control centres within the LBAs and industrial estates for enhanced industrial extension services to MSE with a view to modernizing their process technology, and improving product quality, packaging and marketing. Assist local business associations to establish higher purchase and leasing schemes for the MSEs plant and equipment. Upgrade skills of growth-oriented artisans to produce appropriate tools, equipment and machinery for use by MSEs.
4. Infrastructure development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor development of fully serviced industrial estates for use by MSEs in agroprocessing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.1 Develop fully serviced industrial estates for use by MSEs in agroprocessing in collaboration with LBAs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent power outages affect production, which results in MSEs using alternative sources of power such as more expensive generators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish financing leasing mechanisms within LBAs and industrial estates for assisting MSEs to acquire and install solar equipment within their businesses.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agro-based MSEs have not been furnished with fully serviced work sites as have their counterpart traders and hawkers within the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District assemblies to provide serviced work site (land, premises, water, power, and information and communication technologies) for MSEs in value-adding businesses.

Policy cluster	Challenges	Policy interventions
5. Business development services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of capacity-building, professional accreditation and networking for business development services (BDS) providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the capacity for BDS providers to establish a network.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of comprehensive BDS programme for growth-oriented MSEs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalize programmes for providing technical, management and entrepreneurial skills for MSEs at pre-start, start-ups and early survival.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of capacity-building, professional accreditation and networking for the Rural Enterprises Programme BDS providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalize a capacity-building programme for local BDS providers within institutions of higher learning supported by professional accreditation certificate in pedagogical skills.
6. Market access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inappropriate linkages between MSEs with input suppliers, marketers/exporters and BDS providers coupled with the limited size of the domestic market in accessibility to market information and government tenders and limited penetration to regional and national markets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish mechanisms for district assemblies to procure 20 per cent of their annual procurement of goods and services from the MSEs. Establish specific marketing companies to be responsible for market research and the promotion for goods produced by a group of MSEs that are too small themselves to take advantage of potential opportunities. Establish marketing information and advice centres to gather and disseminate information on domestic and export markets, and provide guidance on aspects of product design, packaging, delivery and promotion.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition from major medium and large enterprises and cheap imports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the LBAs in line with the economies of scale to facilitate wholesale for MSE goods and services. Strengthen capacity of LBAs to promote more fairs, exhibitions, lectures, workshops and seminars with a view to exploiting the market opportunities.
7. Linkages and networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate linkages between the public sector, large enterprises and MSEs resulting in low level of MSEs integration into supply chains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist LBAs to be properly linked with regional and national associations for facilitating regional, national and international market access. Establish forward and backward linkages for MSEs along the supply chain.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate linkages between LBAs and their members with BDS providers, financial institutions and private sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish proper linkages between LBAs and their members with BDS providers, financial institutions and the private sector.



Appendix 5

Examples of likely policy issues in thematic areas of IFAD work

The information below follows a sample of typical policy issues, by topic, that IFAD often works on in the areas of nutrition, indigenous peoples, gender, rural people's organizations, livestock, climate change adaptation, rural financial services, land and natural resource tenure and governance, and commodity value chains.

Policy activities and priorities related to *nutrition*

- Support the development of appropriate policies to shape nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems (e.g. promotion and institutional purchase of nutritious products, local market development, sustainable production).
- Create and sustain effective multisectoral and multistakeholder mechanisms for agriculture/food systems that link and coordinate with other sectors (or link agriculture/food systems with existing ones).

Policy activities and priorities related to *indigenous peoples*

- Support consultative mechanisms involving indigenous peoples for development of national policies to protect their land, territories and natural resources.
- Support national processes to develop legal frameworks and policies that recognize and protect indigenous peoples' inalienable rights to lands, territories and resources; acknowledge the role of indigenous traditional institutions, authorities and organizations.
- Set up national processes to ensure that free, prior and informed consent is systematically and properly obtained by governments and other entities in the context of national projects targeting or affecting indigenous peoples.
- Support governments in their efforts to recognize in national programmes/projects the contributions of traditional knowledge systems, technologies and livelihoods for ecosystem resilience and sustainable development. For example, recognize the value of indigenous diverse food systems as a key element of national policies and frameworks for sustainable development, food security and climate change resilience.
- Support governments in developing the national action plans, strategies and other measures, in partnership with indigenous peoples, to achieve the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Sustainable Development Goals, as agreed in the outcome document of the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

Policy activities and priorities related to *gender*

- Support the analysis of the revision of laws and regulations governing women's access to productive assets and inputs (credit, land, property, etc.).
- Support governments' formulation and implementation of strategies and action plans on gender in the context of rural development.
- Support and strengthen the capacity of organizations and bodies that represent women's voices in policymaking at the local, regional and national level.

Policy activities and priorities related to *rural people's organizations*

- Strengthen local government decentralization and accountability by working with stakeholders and their representatives and voicing their aspirations and concerns through the institutional arrangements in place.
- Strengthen local participatory planning and community-based procurement.
- Help to develop policies that focus on rural microenterprise development.
- Help to develop policies on access to technology/productive infrastructure that would favour smallholder farmers' and microentrepreneurs' sustainable and market-based access to climate smart technology, equipment, machinery and small infrastructure.
- Work with government on trade and import/export as well as taxation issues affecting smallholder agriculture.
- Support the development of policy platforms for policy discussion and subsequent articulation of laws impacting the livelihoods of rural populations and agriculture.
- Support the autonomous engagement of farmers' organizations in their own assessment on policies and subsequent support for their consultation with counterparts.
- Support farmers' organizations' autonomous identification of policy issues, their own policy assessment, and the active development of the policy framework in partnership with the legislator(s).

Policy activities and priorities related to *livestock*

- Promote integration of food security and nutrition into related policies to maximize the positive role that livestock have in improving the economic, social and environmental sustainability of food systems, and strengthen coherence between sectoral policies and programmes.
- Develop capacity to meet national and international food safety and quality standards, frameworks and schemes, ensuring that they are appropriate for different scales, contexts and modes of livestock production and marketing, in particular the Codex Alimentarius standards.
- Strengthen the security of tenure rights in line with the Committee on World Food Security Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, including in all cases of conflict.
- Enable pastoralists' mobility, including transboundary passage as appropriate; securing access to land, water, markets and services, adaptive land management, and facilitate responsible governance of common resources, in accordance with national and international laws.
- Enhance the role of pastoralist organizations, and strengthen public policies and investments for the provision of services adapted to the needs and ways of life of pastoralists and their mobility, including promoting gender equality and addressing the specific needs and roles of women within pastoralist communities.

Policy activities and priorities for *climate change adaptation*

- Support the formulation of nationally determined contributions (NDCs) for the Paris Agreement (overarching commitments for climate change that will require reporting at the national level).
- Align NDCs with national adaptation plans and adaptation pathway policies.

- Integration of climate change adaptation priorities in subsector policies, such as agriculture (may be subdivided into crops and livestock) and fisheries.
- Revision of standards, codes and manuals used by various government agencies based on improved information and climate risk analyses to encourage development of climate-resilient infrastructure.

Policy activities related to rural *financial services*

- Facilitate evidence-based policy guidelines and institutional approaches for rural financial inclusion.
- Support national financial inclusion policies or action plans (and their linkage to international agreements).
- Support the development of a national microfinance or rural finance policy or strategy (see above), the deregulation of interest rates, establishing a legal system that protects property and land-use rights, and developing prudential regulation and supervision that promotes to mobilize deposits and attract private capital for investment in smallholder agriculture and rural small and medium-sized enterprises.

Policy activities and priorities associated with *land and natural resource tenure and governance*

- **Recognition and recording of multiple and sometimes overlapping user rights in community-level land-use management planning processes, including watershed management, territorial, rangeland and forest management.** Community-based land and natural resource use management plans should be developed through processes involving all relevant stakeholders and should be integrated into and recognized by higher-level management plans. The process should be initiated by a participatory analysis of multiple land and resource uses and the associated users in a particular geographic area, including a recognition of its use by more vulnerable and marginalized groups. It should entail the formulation of community-based by-laws to recognize and govern multiple land and natural resource use and access, and the approval of these by relevant community and higher-level authorities. It could also include the recognition of co-management and use arrangements between governments and communities concerning public forest reserves or other public lands. Special attention needs to be given to the recognition and strengthening of the rights of women, young people, indigenous peoples, and other vulnerable or marginalized groups.
- **Registration of land ownership and use rights.** This can involve the registration of community, group, familial or individual ownership or use rights. It can also include the registration of public lands (forests, rangelands, etc.). The process typically involves identifying, surveying and mapping the land parcels and the adjudication of ownership or use rights to these. Mapping should be done through participatory processes, as well as with aerial photography and satellite imagery. Adjudication of boundaries and ownership or use rights should involve legitimate and representative community institutions, as well as recourse to higher-level authorities for dispute resolution. Land parcel registers should preferably be maintained at the community level or the lowest level of government, but should also be integrated into a national cadastre. Specific measures, such as the co-spousal registration of ownership of family land and the revision of inheritance laws, may be required to ensure that women's ownership and use rights are also recognized.
- **Equitable land access.** Depending on the context, this can range from measures that improve access for marginalized and vulnerable groups to land in irrigation schemes or to

communal forests and grazing lands, to more ambitious state-supported land acquisition and redistribution programmes. When coupled with economic empowerment and tenure security, it is expected that improved access will increasingly be achieved through land markets, both rental and purchase.

- **Land and natural resource conflict resolution and access to judiciary and legal aid.** Intra-household, community and inter-community land dispute mediation mechanisms should be used as a first recourse and involve legitimate and representative local leadership. Decentralized and higher-level courts should be readily accessible for arbitration if local mediation fails. Affected parties should have easy access to legal or paralegal services.
- **Civic education and public awareness-raising on land and natural resource rights.** This should be linked to broader community empowerment processes and include specific measures for ensuring that marginalized and vulnerable groups are well informed of their rights. It should also entail awareness-raising for community leadership and higher-level authorities regarding their roles and responsibilities in protecting the rights of such groups.

Policy activities and priorities associated with *commodity value chains*

Well-functioning agricultural markets and value chains rely on supportive policies and a conducive regulatory environment for doing business and interacting with markets. Macroeconomic policies (inflation, exchange rate regulations, taxes, etc.), political stability and good governance (e.g. absence of corruption) are equally important, as they affect the incentives for and the capacity of private businesses to invest in a particular value chain or expand their operations to include small-scale farmers. Another area where public investment is crucial is infrastructure: roads, electricity, water supply, bridges, etc. Without infrastructure, transport, processing and other marketing costs may become prohibitively expensive, making market transactions or value addition impossible. IFAD does not have a comparative advantage in the macroeconomic arena and usually supports only small-scale infrastructure (irrigation schemes, processing/storage facilities, tertiary rural roads, etc.), although it can mobilize cofinancing from other donors and the private sector. An area where IFAD can engage the government in value chain projects is in the laws and regulations that have a direct influence on the functioning of agricultural markets and value chains or on the rural business environment, such as:

- market competition and market players' behaviour to promote market diversification;
- the regulatory and supervisory framework for cooperatives and farmers' organizations;
- access to financial and business development services;
- rural business regulations, such as business start-up, obtaining permits, licences or certification, taxes and fees, registering property, enforcing contracts, protecting investors, and business closure;
- rural transport policy;
- agricultural trade policy, including tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade;
- food safety and standards, including labels and certification;
- price and non-price subsidies or controls for agricultural inputs and outputs;
- labour legislation for farm workers and agribusiness employees;
- land tenure; and
- agricultural advisory services and research and development.



Appendix 6

Tools for country-level policy engagement (CLPE) activities²⁵

In this appendix, a range of possible tools that can be used at various stages of the policy cycle is described. In Table 1, 13 tools are presented (in alphabetical order), and an indication is given at what stage in the country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP)/project cycle they may be used and for what purpose. Not all will necessarily be easily accommodated in the context of design missions; however, they may offer ideas or techniques, or offer useful lines of enquiry, that can be used.

Table 1: Tools for CLPE activities

Specific tool/method	How used in COSOP? (Country-level checklist C)	How used in project design? (Project-level checklist C)	How used in monitoring and evaluation?
1. After Action Review (AAR)			Review of lessons learned in conducting specific activities.
2. Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix (AIIM)	Offers understanding of policy stakeholders and how to work with them to achieve goals.	Offers understanding of policy stakeholders and how to work with them to achieve goals.	Can be used to track how stakeholders have been influenced.
3. Bellwether methodology			Can determine where a policy issue or proposal is positioned on the policy agenda; how decision makers and other influentials are thinking and talking about it; and how likely policymakers are to act on it.
4. Context, Evidence, Links framework	Provides information about context – policy windows, actors and networks, gaps in evidence, etc; and can facilitate development of realistic strategy.	Provides information about context – policy windows, actors and networks, gaps in evidence, etc; and can facilitate development of realistic strategy.	
5. Force field analysis		Identifies forces supporting and opposing policy changes, and can help prioritize strategies to be followed.	
6. Horizon scanning	Can help to assess potential broad areas for policy engagement.		
7. Impact logs			Captures descriptive data on impact of policy activities conducted.

²⁵ Unless otherwise indicated, the tools presented here are authored by the Overseas Development Institute, Research and Policy in Development programme and should be cited as such. The text has been adapted from published and unpublished workshop material developed and piloted by the Overseas Development Institute over the last decade.

Specific tool/method	How used in COSOP? (Country-level checklist C)	How used in project design? (Project-level checklist C)	How used in monitoring and evaluation?
8. K* framework	Provides an understanding of what type of knowledge function to play during the COSOP, and helps to define an appropriate knowledge management strategy and partnerships for policy influence.	Provides an understanding of what type of knowledge function to play during the project, and helps to define an appropriate knowledge management strategy and partnerships for policy influence.	
9. Political economy analysis	Provides understanding of how incentives, institutions and ideas shape political action and policy outcomes.	Provides understanding of how incentives, institutions and ideas shape political action and policy outcomes.	
10. Problem tree analysis		Analyses the causes of the problem and the consequences, helping to focus IFAD's policy engagement on core issues.	
11. RAPID Outcome Assessment (ROA)			Helps to understand why specific changes in policy or the policy environment arose and this may lead to lessons as to how future changes might be influenced.
12. Stories of change			Presents information about the change the CLPE work is making.

Each of these 13 tools is described in turn in the following pages.

6.1 After Action Review

What is it and why should I use it

An After Action Review (AAR) is a simple process used by a team to capture the lessons learned from past successes and failures, with the goal of improving future performance. It is an opportunity for a team to reflect on a project, activity, event or task so that they can do better the next time. It can also be employed in the course of a project to learn while doing. AARs are intended to be carried out with an open spirit and no intent to blame (the United States Army used the phrase “leave your rank at the door” to optimize learning in this process). Some groups document the review results; others prefer to emphasize the no-blame culture by having no written record.

AAR is a form of group reflection; participants review what was intended, what actually happened, why it happened and what was learned. One member of the group facilitates, capturing results on a flipchart or in a document. It is typically organized around four questions: What was supposed to happen? What actually happened? Were there any differences and why? And what would one have done differently next time?

Expected uses and outcomes

An AAR is most commonly used as an internal learning process, helping to guide discussion around a project or activity. It can be helpful for sharing knowledge and understanding within a team, for building trust among team members, and for overcoming fear of making mistakes. The outcome of an AAR can also be used to communicate knowledge and learning, for example, in a progress report or on a project website. The format of the AAR can be adjusted, depending on the intended use. For instance, if the purpose is to share knowledge within the team (and everyone is present when the AAR is discussed), it may not be necessary to write it up in full – although it will be useful to keep meeting notes. If the findings are to be used as content in an annual report or on a project website, it will need to be written up in full.

The AAR is of particular value as a tool for monitoring policy activities and processes, where learning is at a premium, and quantitative approaches to monitoring are often of only limited value. Conducted during project implementation, it can contribute to progress reporting, to a project’s communication strategy, and its results and lessons learned can be fed directly into the annual work plan and budget (AWPB) process. It may also result in the need to make adjustments to the project logical framework.

The tool

AARs should be carried out immediately after a defined activity, while the team is still available and memories are fresh. It is recommended that an AAR is done at key points during a project, activity, event or task.

Ideally, an AAR includes all members of the team. However, it can be done with fewer people. Alternatively, the discussion can be opened up to include other stakeholders.

The steps

An AAR can be done by two or more people who have been involved in the same project or activity. The AAR should be carried out immediately after the activity to capture the most accurate information.

1.	<p>Before the session, put three sheets of flipchart paper on the wall and write the following questions on the paper:</p> <p>Sheet one</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was supposed to happen? • What actually happened? • Why were there differences? <p>Sheet two</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What worked? • What did not work? • Why? <p>Sheet three</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would you do differently next time?
2.	<p>Identify a scribe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the scribe writing on the flipchart paper, you could also identify someone to minute the session and capture learning.
3.	<p>Focus on sheet one. Ask participants to identify what was supposed to happen, what actually happened and how the actual outcome differed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask sub-questions to identify specific differences.
4.	<p>Focus on sheet two. Ask participants to name one thing that worked and one thing that did not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the room for volunteers or go around everyone in turn.
5.	<p>Follow up with leading questions to explore why these things did not work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be helpful to have prepared leading questions in advance.
6.	<p>Ask the group what they would do differently next time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make recommendations actionable and as specific as possible. For example, an AAR following a workshop could have the following recommendation: “Make more time to understand the audience.” However, a better recommendation would be “Make contact with the organizing body representative and ask about the range of participants before planning the workshop.” • Identify action points and name people who will be responsible for taking these forward.

What the results might look like

BOX 1

Example – Joint After Action Review by CARE and World Vision International, with OXFAM GB and Catholic Relief Services, April 2005

This is an example of an After Action Review (AAR) done during a workshop following the crisis caused by the tsunami of 26 December 2006. The workshop consolidated a number of country-level learning activities.

The AAR focused mainly on the four most-affected countries: Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand, with additional participation by staff from CARE Somalia.

The primary purpose was to explore ways in which participant organizations could jointly improve their performance and quality of work by reflecting back on their activities and actions. It presented an opportunity for participants from various organizations to discover for themselves what happened, why, and how to build on strengths and improve on areas of weakness, as well as exploring ways in which they might collaborate more effectively.

During the workshop, participants discussed best practices and lessons learned in country groups. They then discussed these across three themes: accountability, capacity and coordination.

Out of the best practices discussed over the two days, five were selected as having been most crucial to improving response time and effectiveness:

- having existing capacity to respond;
- making linkages at the community level with local structures and community leaders;
- having consistent leadership in the development of strategic plans;
- the existence of a longer-term planning and fundraising strategy; and
- the use of humanitarian standards such as Sphere.

The top lessons learned from an inter-agency perspective included:

- the need for early social/economic analysis, which would aid programming and programme monitoring for joint rapid assessments;
- the need for a central role for community consultation and participation; and
- the importance of preparedness, notably the need to build local capacity for emergency response.

Time was then spent action planning on the first three lessons learned. Participants returned to their countries with plans to take forward the lessons from the workshop collaboratively. Reflecting on the workshop, participants said that as the starting point for a longer process of collaboration, it had been very useful. Participants generally felt that it had helped in reinforcing closer working relationships between non-governmental organizations; many suggested that the process should be opened up to wider representation. It was also anticipated that the workshop outputs would be a valuable input into the planned multi-agency evaluation and other emerging projects and working groups.

BOX 2**Example of an After Action Review**

This is an example of an After Action Review (AAR) done by VERN Network. The review was done after a workshop on how to write effective policy briefs in Hanoi, Viet Nam, May 2008. The AAR was intended for internal learning. The following notes are from the meeting.

What was supposed to happen?

- VERN members have a clearer understanding of the principles of effective policy brief development and have some hands-on experience.
- One pilot VERN academic research paper is translated into a policy brief, with mentoring from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).
- VERN members have a better understanding of the key principles of strategic communication and policy engagement.

What actually happened?

- There was active engagement during the workshop.
- The workshop received lots of positive feedback.
- There was lower attendance than hoped, but this perhaps encouraged more active participation, especially from junior team members.
- A presentation by one member of his policy brief was well done and suggested internalization of the learning process about policy brief development.
- There was some expression of disappointment that there was not more detailed advice on the type of English language needed to express ideas simply for a policy audience. Requests received for follow-up workshop on this.

Why were there differences?

- A one-day workshop was too short to go into as much detail as perhaps participants desired.
- ODI was unaware that “how to write simple English” was a demand of the team; this had not come out of earlier needs assessment.

What went well?

- There was active and enthusiastic participation by present VERN members.
- There was active and enthusiastic work on the policy brief by pilot research member.

What could be improved on?

- It is important to develop workshops as one of a series where all members work on briefs over a series of workshops to refine their translation of academic papers to effective policy-resonant and audience-appropriate products.
- Pilot policy briefs could have been finished earlier and circulated.

What would you do differently next time?

- Circulate papers to participants with enough time for them to review before the event.
- Consider planning a two- or three-part workshop.

Further resources

- Collison, C. and G. Parcell. 2001. *Learning to Fly*. Oxford: Capstone.
- Whiffen, P. 2001. Seizing Learning Opportunities at Tearfund. *Knowledge Management Review*, November/December.

6.2 The Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix

What is it and why should I use it?

The Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix (AIIM²⁶) helps you to map and understand the different people or groups **that COSOP or project design teams need to be aware of when planning a policy engagement strategy**, and how IFAD needs to work with them to achieve its goals. For example, the policymakers you are trying to influence or other organizations that are doing similar work. Using this tool, you think about how *aligned* these stakeholders are with the policy engagement objectives, how *interested* they are in the policy issue and how much *influence* they have upon achieving the desired policy change. By doing this, you will better understand your stakeholders and how you need to work with them to achieve your goals. This exercise can be a valuable first step to really improving policy engagement.

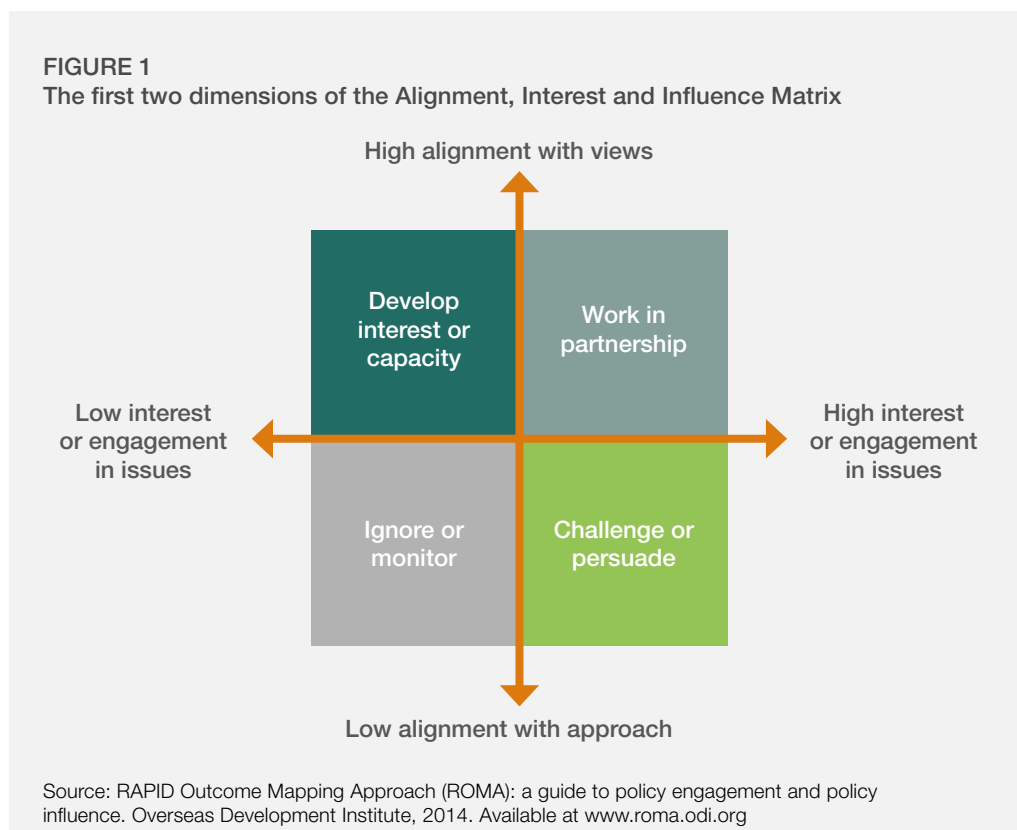
Expected uses and outcomes

Use the AIIM tool in a workshop or group setting. Having a variety of people in the group will ensure you do not miss any important stakeholders and that you hear different perspectives.

The tool can be useful in the planning stages of the COSOP or projects, to think about the scope of your engagement and where to put your resources. However, you can use it during implementation to consolidate thinking about who is involved and how to work together. You can also use it at the end of the COSOP or project, as a monitoring and learning tool, to track how stakeholders have been influenced.

The tool

AIIM is a four-dimensional matrix. The first two dimensions are the degree to which they agree or disagree with your policy position and the degree of their interest in the policy issue (see Figure 1). The next two dimensions are the “power” they have to influence the policy issue and the “power” you have to influence them.



26 RAPID/Overseas Development Institute developed the AIIM tool in 2007 and has used it in over 50 workshops with researchers and research institutions around the world.

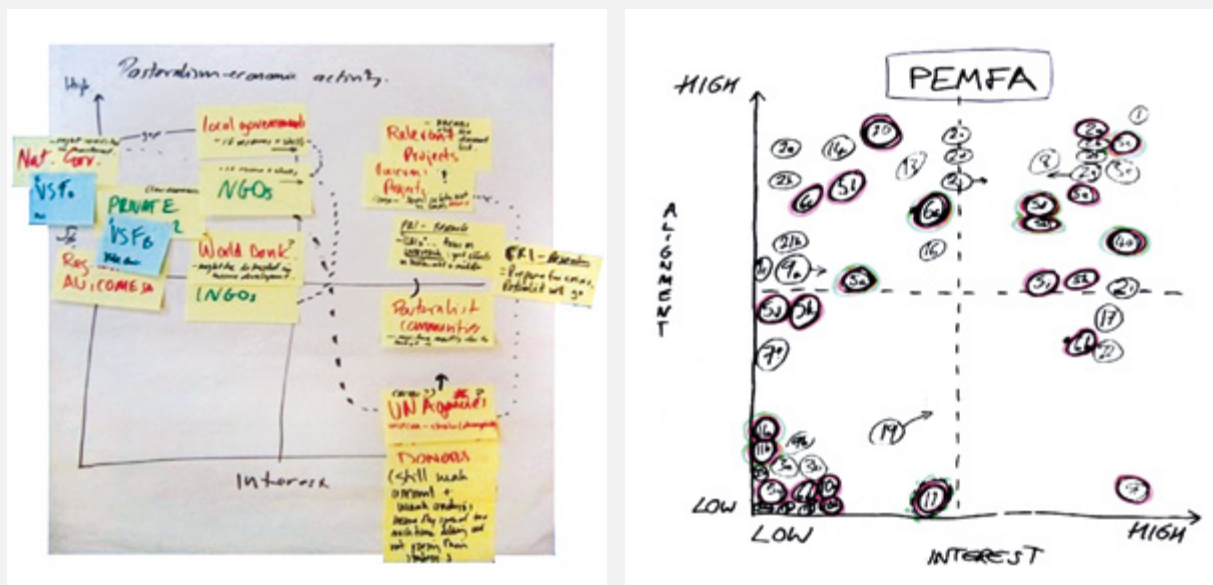
The steps

1.	Discuss and identify your COSOP or project policy objective (be specific).
2.	Put a sheet of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe.
3.	Draw two axes on the paper. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizontal axis for stakeholder level of interest. • Vertical axis for stakeholder level of alignment with the objective.
4.	Referring to your policy objective, write down all stakeholders you can think of on post-it notes (one stakeholder per post-it note). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be as specific as possible (i.e. do not just write “donors”, name them). • Do not be limited to one post-it note per organization. If different teams or people have different degrees of alignment, then separate them.
5.	Place the post-it notes on the AllM one by one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As people place their post-it note on the AllM, explain to the group why they are putting it in that position. • This may lead to discussion – which is good.
6.	Look at the different matrix groupings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The top-right quadrant is working in partnership: these stakeholders agree with your aims and are interested. You may want to form a “community of practice” with these stakeholders. You could share ideas and contacts. Stakeholders from this group could also become champions to advocate for your project. • The top-left quadrant is develop interest or capacity: they agree with you, they are simply not that motivated or have greater priorities. You may want to energize or motivate these stakeholders. You could start to engage with them and develop a communications plan, share human-interest stories, reach out via media and advocacy. • The bottom-right quadrant is challenge or persuade: they are interested in the topic, but do not agree. You may want to try to convince these people of your viewpoint. Evidence works best with these stakeholders. Communicating human-interest stories and engaging them in debate can help. Using “champions” to reach this group can also be useful. Although, in some cases, there may not be much you can do. • The lower-left quadrant is ignore or monitor: you may want to forget this group because these people are not interested and they do not agree. If they are not important for your project’s success, ignore them and focus resources elsewhere.
7.	Draw arrows to show where you want your stakeholders to move. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start to draw arrows of where you would like stakeholders to move across quadrants. For example, is an important stakeholder currently in the bottom-right quadrant “challenge or persuade” and you want them to be in the top-right quadrant “working in partnership”? • Pick those that are most important to your project. Five or six is enough. Each of these arrows represents a potential engagement strategy later, so by restricting this to five or six ensures it is manageable.
8.	Use the sticker dots to identify power or influence on the post-it notes on the flipchart. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you do not have sticker dots, use coloured pens. • The dot symbolizes power or influence. If the stakeholder has a lot of power or influence over your project, place three stickers on the post-it. If it has medium influence, place two. If it has low or limited influence, place one. If it has no influence, place none. • Use this to help prioritize who and where you focus your energy and resources.

9. **Determine your priorities and outline action points.**
- As you decide where to focus your energy and resources, make a note (on a separate flipchart) of follow-up actions that you are going to take to make changes in the directions that you have identified.
 - As you assemble a list of actions, decide who will take each one forward and ensure they are clear about how to do so.
 - Keep your final matrix as you may want to use it for other tools, such as progress markers (tool x), force-field analysis (tool x) or outcome mapping (tool x).

What the results might look like

FIGURE 2
Examples of an AIIM map in action



Source: Overseas Development Institute, Research and Policy in Development programme, 2017.

Further resources

- The Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix (AIIM) guidance note on the Overseas Development Institute website: www.odi.org/publications/5288-stakeholder-engagement-stakeholder-analysis-aiim-alignment-interest-influence-matrix-roma.
- The Alignment, Interest and Influence tool on the 3ie Policy Impact Toolkit: <http://policyimpacttoolkit.squarespace.com/library/the-alignment-interest-and-influence-matrix-aiim.html>.

6.3 Bellwether methodology

This method was developed by the Harvard Family Research Project to determine where a policy issue or proposal is positioned on the policy agenda; how decision makers and other influential people are thinking and talking about it; and how likely policymakers are to act on it. The methodology involves structured interviews with “bellwethers” or influential people in the public and private sectors, whose positions require that they are politically informed and that they track a broad range of policy issues. Bellwethers are knowledgeable and innovative thought leaders whose opinions about policy issues carry substantial weight and predictive value in the policy arena.

The bellwether methodology involves five main steps common to all key informant interviews. Two steps, however – selecting the bellwether sample and setting up the interviews – require a unique “twist” that sets this approach apart from other types of structured interviews.

- (i) **Select the types or categories of bellwethers to interview.** For example, categories might include policymakers, the media, funders, researchers/think tanks, the business community, trade associations or advocates. Categories chosen should represent the types of individuals whose opinions are important or influential on the policy issue of interest.
- (ii) **Select the bellwether sample.** After sample categories are determined, criteria are developed for selecting individual bellwethers. At least half the sample should include bellwethers who do not have a special or specific connection to the policy issue being explored. This approach increases the probability that issue awareness or knowledge detected during interviews can be linked to advocacy efforts rather than personal experiences or other extraneous variables. Other selection criteria might include, for example, bipartisanship, or gender, ethnic and geographic diversity. Once selection criteria are developed, subject matter experts nominate bellwethers who fit those criteria.
- (iii) **Set up interviews.** Interview set-up is critical. Bellwethers must be unaware before the interview begins that the interview will focus on the specific policy issue of interest. They are informed about what the interview will generally cover, but do not receive specific details. This approach helps to ensure that bellwethers’ responses are authentic and unprompted.
- (iv) **Conduct the interviews.** Interview questions determine what bellwethers know and think about the policy of interest. For example, the interview might start by asking bellwethers what issues they think are at the top of the policy agenda. Their responses (which will be unprompted because they do not know beforehand which specific policy issue you are exploring) indicate whether the advocacy issue of interest shows up on that list, and if so, where, and along with what other issues. Later questions can get more specific and ask about bellwethers’ familiarity with the issue of interest and probe on what they know, allowing later content analysis to determine whether advocates’ messages surface in bellwether discourse about the issue. Questions also might ask bellwethers to predict whether they think the issue will advance in the near future or longer term.
- (v) **Analyse and use the data to inform strategy.** The bellwether methodology returns both summative and formative data.

Summatively, bellwether data can indicate how effective, according to this audience, advocates have been in communicating their messages and whether they have been successful in moving their issue either onto the policy agenda or at increasing its importance. Formatively,

bellwether data can inform advocates about specific gaps in bellwether knowledge about how their messages are playing with this audience. This method is repeatable over time if the advocacy strategy takes place over multiple years.

Example application

The Harvard Family Research Project developed the bellwether methodology for its evaluation of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation's Preschool for California's Children grantmaking programme (it has since been used in other contexts). This 10-year grantmaking programme was designed to establish a universal preschool policy in California. Bellwethers in this case represented a group of leaders not funded by the Packard Foundation, whose positions required that they track state-level issues and politics. They included policymakers from the governor's office, administration, senate, assembly and other policy offices; and leaders from business, the media, academia/think tanks, advocacy and philanthropy. Bellwethers were selected for their diversity on content knowledge, geography and political affiliation (for policymakers). Interviews were conducted with 40 bellwethers in 2005. The methodology was repeated in 2008 with more than 70 bellwethers (adding 30 at the local level).

Bellwether interviews examined bellwethers' familiarity with efforts to promote universal preschool, their perceptions of the likelihood that California would establish universal preschool in the near future, and whether bellwethers saw universal preschool as a priority on California's policy agenda. The methodology resulted in lessons that contributed to real-time learning and informed the Packard Foundation and preschool grantee strategy and messaging.

Further resources

- Coffman, J. and E. Reed. Unique Methods in Advocacy Evaluation. Available at www.pointk.org/resources/files/Unique_Methods_Brief.pdf.

BOX 1

Sample bellwether interview questions

1. Currently, what three issues do you think are at the top of the [state/federal/local] policy agenda?
2. How familiar are you with [the policy of interest]?
3. What individuals, constituencies or groups do you see as the main advocates for [the policy]? Who do you see as the main opponents?
4. Considering the current educational, social and political context, do you think [the policy] should be adopted now or in the near future?
5. Looking ahead, how likely do you think it is that [the policy] will be adopted in the next five years?
6. If [the policy] is adopted, what issues do you think the state needs to be most concerned about related to its implementation?

6.4 Context-Evidence-Links framework

What is it and why should I use it?

The Context-Evidence-Links (CEL) framework is a conceptual tool to think through the context within which IFAD is working as part of the design and implementation phases of COSOPs and projects. It considers how information has been used, shaped or ignored by policymakers and how evidence could be used more effectively for policymaking. The three components of the framework can provide valuable information about policy windows, key policy actors and networks, gaps in existing evidence, alternative means of communication and trends, and changes in the external environment.²⁷

Addressing all these issues can prove a daunting task – this tool can help ease the process. To carry out a lighter version of this tool, eight priority questions have been identified that can be considered if your time is limited. Also, it is likely that you know a lot of the answers to the questions already, but outlining them helps to build a clear contextual picture.

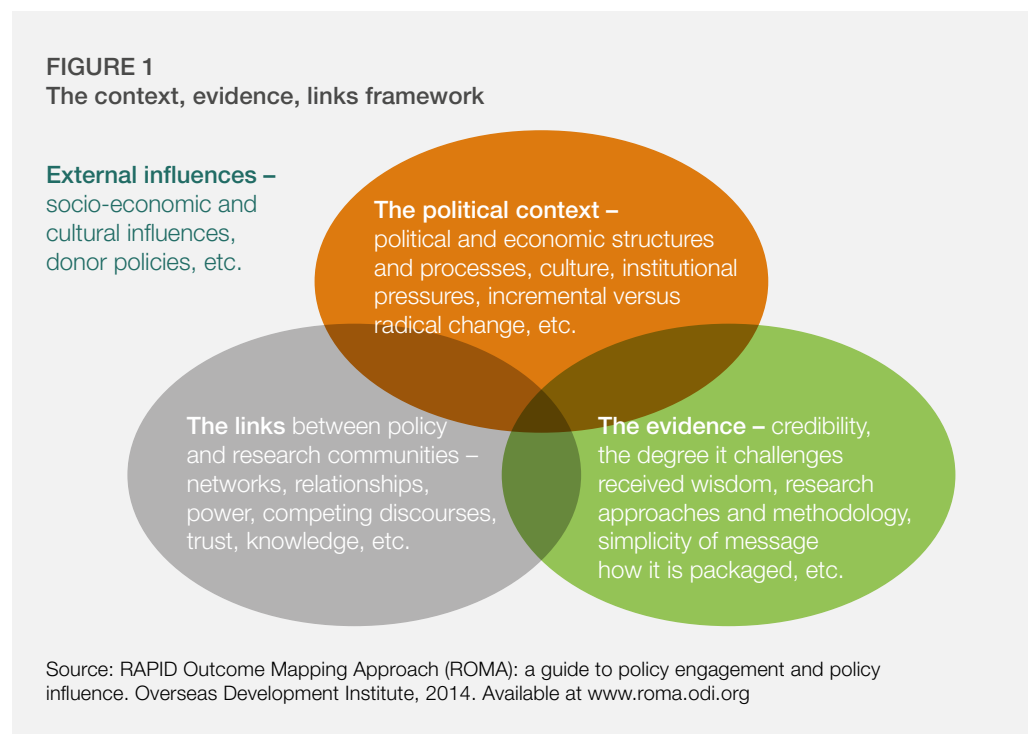
Expected uses and outcomes

The CEL framework should be used when analysing political change and the factors that affect the role of evidence in influencing policy. It should be used when seeking to understand the links between an intervention's tactics, activities and inputs, and the corresponding changes in policy.

The framework is particularly helpful to strategize during design phases. The exercise is likely to draw on strengths and weaknesses of past interventions, and therefore may provide lessons for how you could adjust your work to make your impact greater. Making corresponding changes to your COSOP will help to capture the adjustments or to outline new methods or approaches that need to be made.

The tool

The framework focuses on three areas:



²⁷ The CEL framework was developed by the Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) team at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in 2002, and has been used by programmes and organizations around the world. See Crewe and Young (2002), Bridging Research and Policy: Context, Evidence and Links. ODI Working Paper 173: www.odl.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/184.pdf.

Context: This means considering the larger political arena. For example, the form of government (non-, semi- or fully democratic), type of institutions or level of media and academic freedom. How strong is the demand for policy change? What are the incentives for change? Do civil servants have room to manoeuvre? Do they employ participatory approaches? What are the best windows of opportunity to attempt policy change?

Evidence and communication: It is important when advocating for change to look at the quality of evidence and communication. Policy influence often comes about when messages are packaged and targeted effectively to their audience, and when you engage in dialogue with policymakers rather than “talking at them”.

BOX 1

Guide questions (the eight priority questions are highlighted)

Context

1. Who are the key policy actors?
2. Is there a demand for research and new ideas among policymakers?
3. What are the sources of resistance to evidence-based policymaking?
4. **What is the policy environment?**
 - What are the policymaking structures?
 - What are the policymaking processes?
 - What is the relevant legal/policy framework?
 - What are the opportunities and timing for input into formal processes?
5. **How do global, national and local political, social and economic structures and interests affect the room for manoeuvre of policymakers?**
6. Who shapes the aims and outputs of policies?
7. **How do assumptions influence policymaking? To what extent are decisions routine, incremental, fundamental or emergent, and who supports or resists change?**

Evidence

8. What are the prevailing narratives?
9. Is there enough evidence (research based, experience and statistics) to support these?
10. **What type of evidence exists? What type convinces policymakers? How is evidence presented?**
11. Is the evidence relevant? Is it accurate, material and applicable?
12. How was the information gathered and by whom?
13. **Are the evidence and the source perceived as credible and trustworthy by policy actors?**
14. Has any information or research been ignored and why?

Links

15. **Who are the key stakeholders (from AIIM)?**
16. Who are the experts?
17. What links and networks exist between them?
18. **What roles do they play? Are they intermediaries between research and policy?**
19. Whose evidence do they communicate?
20. **Which individuals or institutions have significant power to influence policy?**
21. Are these policy actors and networks legitimate? Do they have a constituency, if so, whom?

Source: Adapted from Start and Hovland (2004: 18).

Links: The framework emphasizes how networks and relationships can influence policy change. Are there effective feedback processes with policymakers that are based on a foundation of trust? Links demonstrate the level of trust between different communities.

The steps

CEL can be developed individually and with minimal resources responses to the guide questions can be sketched. Alternatively, CEL can be conducted by a group. If working in a group:

1.	Divide into groups of around three participants.
2.	Put three sheets of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label one context, one evidence and one links. • Place the links paper below context and evidence so that they almost form a circle.
3.	Discuss and determine which area of your work will be analysed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If sufficiently narrow, this could be all of your work or you could pick a particular policy area.
4.	Work through the guide questions in Box 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write the answers to each question on post-it notes and add to the flipchart paper. • Be as specific as possible. • Explain your answers to the group as you put them up.
5.	Add a new sheet of flipchart paper alongside links titled “recommendations”. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss what you have learned from the exercise and how you might apply it to your work. • Write down possible recommendations as you go. • If appropriate, add an action and person who will lead the action next to each recommendation.

Further resources

- *Bridging Research and Policy in International Development: An Analytical and Practical Framework* (2004) Briefing paper: Overseas Development Institute, Research and Policy in Development Programme. Available at: www.odi.org/publications/159-bridging-research-policy-international-development-analytical-practical-framework.

BOX 2**An example of CEL – Poverty reduction strategies**

In September 1999, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) adopted a new approach to aid – Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). How did the idea of the PRSP come to be adopted? What was the role of research in this process – both “academic research” in general and the “applied policy research” within the World Bank and IMF? An Overseas Development Institute case study traces the various factors that contributed to this far-reaching policy shift.

Political context: The most important contextual factor that shaped the PRSP initiative was the convergence of debates and controversies in the field of international development in the late 1990s. This led to a widespread sense of there being “a problem” within the international development policy field even though policymakers did not agree on the exact nature of the problem. The challenges that needed to be addressed – particularly by the World Bank and the IMF – included:

- The questioning of the mandates of the IMF and World Bank – in the light of the 1997 Asia Crisis and the failure of Structural Adjustment Programmes to resolve Africa’s development problems.
- The 1999 Review of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and the campaign to make debt relief “broader, deeper, faster, better”.
- The need to operationalize the new conceptual framework for aid put forward by World Bank President James Wolfensohn’s Comprehensive Development Framework.

The PRSP initiative can be viewed as bringing together all these interlinked concerns, and providing answers or at least partial solutions to the issues that needed to be addressed. It therefore received broad-based support from many different parties.

Evidence: There were three main types of evidence that influenced the emergence of the PRSP initiative. First, academic research contributed, often indirectly, to the major shifts in international development discourse towards poverty reduction, participation and aid effectiveness. Second, there were important pieces of applied policy research undertaken in the late 1990s, in particular the research related to the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) reviews, the HIPC review, the Strategic Partnership with Africa Working Groups, and the NGO research on debt relief. This evidence focused more on providing policy recommendations and operational solutions. This was seen as particularly credible when it was commissioned by the international financial institutions themselves or other donors, demonstrated analytical rigour, and was communicated in a language that was accessible and relevant to World Bank and IMF staff and other donor agencies. Third, an extremely powerful demonstration effect was provided by the positive experience of Uganda in drafting the Poverty Eradication Action Plan. This did much to convince policymakers of the feasibility and merits of the poverty reduction strategy model.

Links: The PRSP story is characterized by a multitude of links between policymakers and researchers in main institutional actors – the World Bank and IMF, Strategic Partnership with Africa, the governments of the UK and the United States, and the NGO movement. As one interviewee put it, “none of the players is more than two handshakes away from any of the others”. The formal and informal networks contributed to the speed with which the PRSP ideas were spread and accepted in international development policy.

Source: www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/198.pdf.

6.5 Force Field Analysis

What is it and why should I use it?

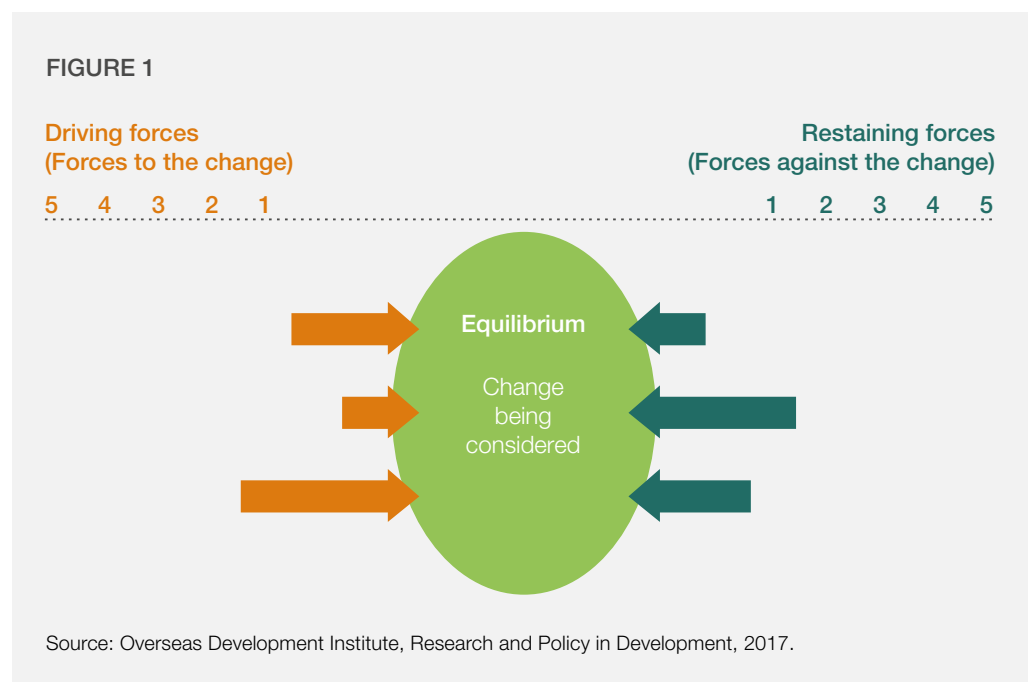
Force Field Analysis: Force Field Analysis is a flexible tool to identify the forces supporting and opposing a desired outcome and suggest concrete responses. It can be used to inform decision-making and is particularly useful for planning and implementing change management programmes in organizations. It is useful for gaining a comprehensive view of the different influences involved in a policy or in a process of change, where they originate from and how strong they are. As a result, it can help identify the relative priority of strategies to be followed.

Expected uses and outcomes

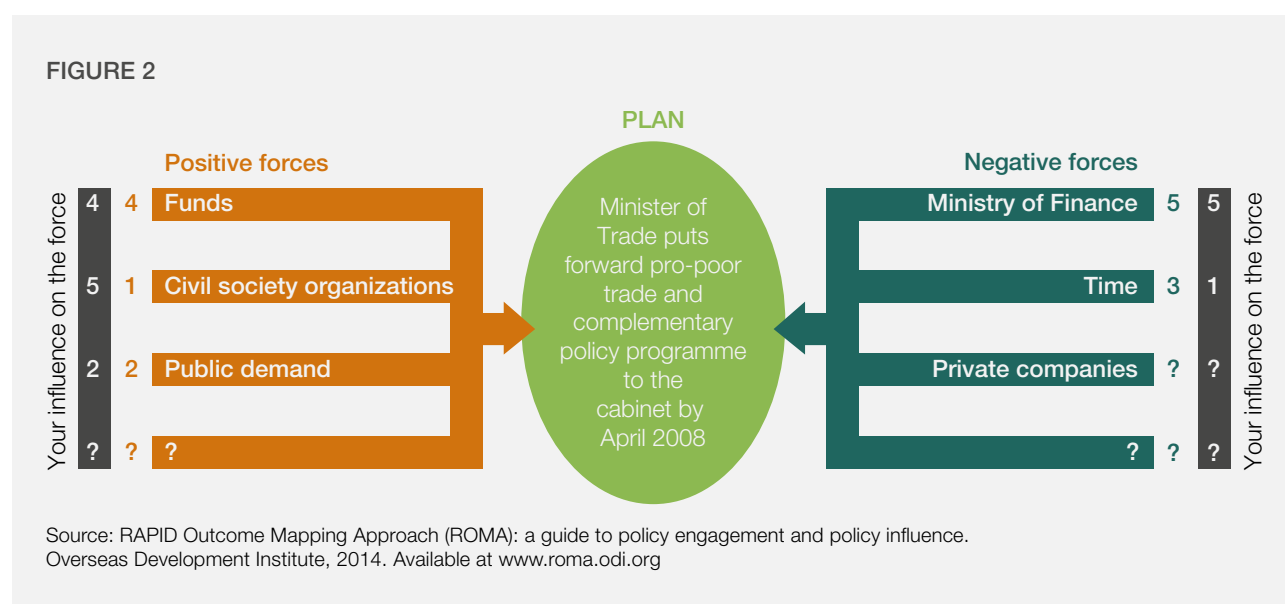
You can use this tool to map the context (identifying forces for and against change), or you can use it when you have identified broad policy objectives or stakeholder-specific outcomes and you want to generate activities to bring about those outcomes. The aim is to identify forces that facilitate a specific change or outcome and forces that constrain/block a specific change or outcome. By force, we do not necessarily mean an actor, but a factor or trend (such as limited power, declining budgets, poor relationships and poor technical capacity).

Once positive and negative forces have been identified, they can be rated in absolute terms, or ranked in order of the degree of influence they have over the change/outcome specified. The aim is then to think of activities that you think will increase the small positive forces and reduce the large negative forces.

Once complete, you should have a list of activities that help you to facilitate the emergence of a specific change or outcome that you would like to see.



The tool



The steps

1.	Divide into groups of around three participants.
2.	<p>Put the sheet of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree on the area of change or stakeholder-specific outcome to be discussed. • Write this in the centre of the flipchart. • Draw two columns on the far left and right of the paper. • Label the one on the left positive forces. • Label the one on the right negative forces.
3.	<p>Now brainstorm forces for and against change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List forces in support of the change (driving the change forward) in the column to the left. • List forces working against the change (holding it back) in a column to the right. • Group these by theme if you find there are too many. • Rate each force between 1 (weak) to 5 (strong).
4.	<p>Determine what action you can take.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss action to reduce the rating of the high “restraining” forces and to increase the rating of the “driving” forces. • There may be a high negative force, which you could feasibly try and reduce. • If you find you have no power to influence this, you may want to do something to increase a low positive force over which you have some considerable influence.
5.	<p>Prioritize forces that you wish to focus on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are far too many forces or you feel you do not have enough information to generate relevant activities, you can rate the extent to which you or your organization has power to influence the force identified.
6.	<p>Given these priorities, reconsider your actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With this additional information, discuss (again) actions you might take to reduce the rating of the high “restraining” forces and to increase the rating of the “driving” forces, especially where you have some influence over the particular force.

What the results might look like and some examples

The FAO adapted Force Field Analysis, adding an extra element of the organization's control over a situation. For example, in an attempt to improve success in afforestation and reforestation programmes, the agency might list all the driving forces and restraining forces. It then rates each force by its importance and by the degree of control it exerts over that force. The totals are then calculated and a table developed (Table 1). This means that for each force, the higher the total of importance and control, the more impact the agency should have in trying to address that force. In addition, if the agency can find some forces that explain others, the effectiveness of its actions will be greater. For example, suppose that "improved operational planning" can reduce "losses to fires and grazing" as well as "poor procedures for hiring and paying field workers". Because it has these cross-impacts, in this example, the agency decided to give special attention to "operational planning".

Table 1: Force Field Analysis for success in afforestation and reforestation

	Importance	Agency control	Total
Driving forces			
Rising prices of wood products	2	2	4
Genetically improved planting stock	2	4	6
Improved operational planning	4	5	9
Increasing public support	2	2	5
Restraining forces			
Decreasing agency budget	2	2	5
Irregular annual precipitation	5	1	6
Poor procedures for hiring and paying field workers	4	4	8
Losses to fires and grazing	5	3	8

Further resources

- For original literature of Force Field Analysis, see: K. Lewin. 1951. *Field Theory in Social Science*. New York: Harper and Row.
- PRA: PLA Notes. 1999. Issue 36, pp. 17-23. London: IIED.
- For detailed instructions, a diagram and an example of Force Field Analysis, see www.odi.org/publications/5218-force-field-analysis-decision-maker and www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/194.pdf (pp. 22-23).
- Simple step-by-step guides to do Force Field Analysis are available at www.mindtools.com/forcefld.html, for examples of the use of force field analysis in management and www.psywww.com/mtsite/forcefld.html, for examples of the use of force field analysis in psychology
- Examples of the application of Force Field Analysis in different areas are available at
 - Change management: www.accel-team.com/techniques/force_field_analysis.html.
 - Health (MSH and UNICEF): <http://erc.msh.org/quality/example/example5.cfm>.
- For computer software to conduct Force Field Analysis, see www.skymark.com/resources/tools/force_field_diagram.asp.

6.6 Horizon scanning

What is it and why should I use it?

Horizon scanning can be used when beginning to write a new COSOP, as it can help to identify which topics are going to be a higher priority in the near and upcoming future, and on this basis assess and prioritize policy topics to engage with. For example, a change in government often leads to a change in policy focus; or a global agreement – such as the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals – may prompt national governments to respond by ensuring that their policies reflect and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. In both cases, a possible political window may be created, and this can be capitalized upon.

Horizon scanning uses the STEEPLE mnemonic to guide you through a series of steps to scan the context, considering social, technological, economic, environmental, legal and ethical factors. The framework originated in business strategic planning.

Applying the tool helps to scan the horizon systematically to identify emerging issues that are starting to appear. It can be used to assess and prioritize opportunities. Most of us do this on a regular basis for our own lives, either looking at what jobs are appearing in the industry, new technologies that are surfacing, or new economic policies that may affect us.

Expected uses and outcomes

Information from the horizon scan can be used to communicate to outside parties why particular interventions and policy areas were chosen. For example, as COSOPs can only fit a limited number of projects within the time frame, the horizon scan can explain why it was important to focus on the issues that were selected.

This tool can be done as a desk-based exercise by one person or it can be done in a team.

The tool

The horizon scanning tool uses the STEEPLE framework, a mnemonic to guide you through a series of steps to scan the context. This considers social, technological, economic, environmental, legal and ethical factors:

- S – Social: The social steps prompt you to take a closer look at social and cultural factors within the environment.
- T – Technology: Are there any technological changes that may make a significant difference within the context? Mobile banking may be one example.
- E – Economic: Are there going to be large shifts in economics over this next period? Examples can include inflation, economic growth, or perhaps international trade.
- E – Environmental: Environmental factors affect smallholders in a specific way. Are there any environmental issues that may require priority? For example, climate change is affecting smallholder farmers more acutely and may be a priority.
- P – Political: How does the government intervene in the economy? Specifically, political factors have areas including tax policy, labour law, environmental law, trade restrictions, tariffs and political stability.
- L – Legal: What are the legal and regulatory factors (a subset of the political factors above) that either create or constrain the emergence of economic opportunities in the rural areas?
- E – Ethical: Ethical factors may be a strong priority and are always an issue when considering smallholder farmers. Issues such as food security, women's access to land or food safety are specific examples.

Considering each factor, the horizon is scanned to anticipate what might arise over two years, two to five years, or five plus years.

Table 2: Horizon scanning over different time periods

	0-2 years	2-5 years	5+ years
Society			
Technology			
Environment			
Economics			
Politics			
Legal			
Ethical			

The steps

Before starting, it is important to narrow down the scope of the area you are looking to engage in. What is the specific area you are looking to interact in? What are the boundaries? How long into the future are you looking forward into?

1.	<p>Place a sheet of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may need more sheets of paper as you go.
2.	<p>Outline the STEEPLE acronym on the left side of the flipchart. Next, put down a time line at the top.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the purpose of this example, we have borrowed the time line presented in the United Kingdom's Futures Toolkit; however, the time line can be adjusted depending on your scope.
3.	<p>Brainstorm the possible contextual factors that will most likely occur in the near future and those in the distant future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss each STEEPLE contextual factor and decide what are the scenarios that need to be anticipated over two years, two to five years, or five plus years. These contextual factors may help you to spot policy opportunities that are useful for your policy issue, or they may hinder the advancement of your policy issue and so may need to be addressed in advance. For example, what are the social and cultural factors to consider in the near future? This could be cultural events or shifts in public opinion. This could include sports events such as the Olympics or the World Cup, or perhaps public opinion is moving in a direction that could provide you with a policy window. What technology could influence your policy issue? Mobile phone technology is the most obvious example. Agricultural technology innovations could include the introduction of new seeds. What are the key economic factors that may sway your policy issue in the near future? What policy opportunities are available? You may identify the growing risk of food insecurity in a region and the potential impact on the price of crops. What are the key environmental factors that may dominate your issue? This could be elements of climate change, such as an expected earthquake or drought. What are the key political matters that may influence your policy in the next few years? Are there any upcoming elections? Are there coordinating groups that are trying to focus on particular areas that may affect your policy issue? What are the legal concerns in the nearby future that may affect your policy area? What policy windows are available to push for your policy issue? What are the ethical matters that may influence your policy?

4.	<p>In turn, fill out the entire framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are in a group, discuss these issues together. This helps to ensure that you are being systematic and all encompassing.
5.	<p>Once you have finished filling out the framework, conduct your own analysis.</p> <p>Ask yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has this contextual horizon scanning been all encompassing? Are there any areas that are missing? • Given the information in the framework, what areas are most pressing to work on? Is there an area that is more urgent than others? Urgent can be defined as having a shorter timespan for influence (for example, those policy issues that require action in 0-2 years), or those that are further in the future but require a lot of preparation. • Is it possible to prioritize all the emerging issues? This can help determine which emerging contextual issue to focus on first if you have enough resources to focus on more than one contextual issue. You may know collaborators that can help you pool resources to focus on one particular issue.

Further resources

- Horizon scanning from *The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Strategic Futures for Policy-makers and Analysts* from the United Kingdom Government: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/328069/Futures_Toolkit_beta.pdf.
- Examples of STEEPLE analysis: Visit Pestleanalysis.com: <http://pestleanalysis.com/steep-and-steep-analysis>.

6.7 Impact logs

What are they and why should I use them?

An impact log is a simple way to collect information systematically, which over time can show the impact your work is having. The impact log is simple; it is easy for all staff to contribute to, requires minimum effort to maintain, and can be easily used to demonstrate impact.

The type of information you collect is observations or evidence that your work is useful and being used. This can be quantifiable; for example, how many people attended your event, how many citations of your report are found. More often, however, the impact log captures descriptive data, such as feedback on the quality of a policy brief or workshop, or an observation that someone has been influenced by your work. **This makes it of particular value for policy-related components, where quantitative approaches to monitoring activities may be of limited value.**

"I think this can be very important. Beyond formal M&E of a policy engagement strategy, there is the need to track policy influence. In other words, to keep track of the practical details around what IFAD did, when and with whom (e.g., to who it presented a certain policy recommendation, at which level, at what stage in the policy process, what the feedback was, etc.). In MAFAP [Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agricultural Policies – a unit of FAO], we store this issue-specific qualitative information in a database to make sure we can develop a narrative on our engagement further down the line (when a policy change succeeds, or even when it fails). Without this kind of information, it is very difficult to develop a story of change". (Christian Derlagen, FAO)

Expected used and outcomes

An impact log is usually managed by one person, but includes observations from many different people. As information is fed into the log over time, it builds a body of evidence for impact. This can be used as evidence for internal monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Information from the impact log can be useful for external communications. For example, evidence of impact can be used in your annual report or on your website. You may want to use data to produce charts or infographics that can be easily shared via social media.

The tool

How is the data collected and managed?

The system can be kept simple or a more detailed impact log can be developed, depending on the resources available and, in particular, the capacity of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) staff to manage and analyse the data.

- Information is collated electronically. It is possible to set up a dedicated e-mail address where people can send e-mails (i.e. impact@organization.org).
- Team members are encouraged to forward any messages they receive from external sources, as well as their own observations, which they think indicate some "impact".
- E-mails are reviewed by the M&E team, and the contents extracted into a simple Excel database.
- Information is sorted and filtered to bring together evidence of different sorts of impacts for different parts of the programme. Over time, these create a body of evidence. This can be analysed to identify trends and qualitative "examples of impact" used to illustrate those trends.
- Initially, the system is managed manually, contributing additional evidence to the quarterly M&E progress reports. However, as the M&E system becomes more established, the information can be tagged using data management software and extracted into a centralized M&E database to be analysed statistically.

What information is collected in an impact log?

- Evidence of a “change” to which your organization might have contributed. For example, evidence that stakeholders are thinking differently about the value and use of research-based evidence.
- Evidence that specific work done is being noticed or is making a difference. For example:
 - evidence of the **quality or appropriateness** of outputs;
 - evidence that stakeholders are **aware of and making use of your work**;
 - evidence that stakeholders are **doing things differently** as a result of your work;
 - evidence that **policies have changed or not changed** as a result of your work; and
 - evidence that **policies are having a positive or negative impact on businesses, or no change**.
- Evidence of changes in the way that you are doing things. For example, the way you interact with stakeholders, or the way you communicate research findings.

NB: It is important to collect negative examples of change and examples where there has been no change where it was expected, as well as positive stories.

FIGURE 1
Example of an e-mail forwarded to an impact log

Hey Jeff,

I saw the ODI-UNICEF report and have been circulating it to all and sundry. It's a top report, and especially important for getting the effect of the financial crisis on the children into the public and policy debate. Have the summit of the Americas coming up in 2 weeks, Obama will be in attendance, and we're trying to ratchet up the noise a notch or two. Do let Nicola know about these issues and angles I have shared with you. I'll keep you posted about new and emerging issues.

Take care and do keep in touch,
Gaurav

FIGURE 2
Example of an e-mail forwarded to an impact log

Your draft concept paper is fabulous... I find little (if anything) that I would disagree with or would wish to alter.

In fact, I'm looking to use it already... we have a workshop with our Executives on 17 September at which we are asking ourselves about our roles in evidence and what it means to be an “evidence-based and science-led” organization. Figure 5 in the concept paper provides us with a really helpful “map base” to work out which roles we do (and should) play across the organization (taking account of the supply/demand context as described in Tables 1 and 2). We can then ask whether we're doing these well using the progress indicators in Table 3 and work out what needs to improve using the strategy framework in Fig 6.

FIGURE 3
Example of a contribution to an impact log based on observations from a workshop in which participants described their experiences of using different policy tools

My key conclusions from their feedback are as follows:

- Most had a good understanding of the framework itself, and had tried to apply it to their own work, and had produced some useful baseline information.
- Some tried to use it in a very literal sense, answering each of the 28 detailed questions in turn, and discovered that many of the detailed questions didn't make sense in their specific environments, especially those in centrally planned economies like Viet Nam and China, where there aren't really "intermediaries" in the same sense as in more democratic contexts. They tended to find the framework unhelpful.
- Others used it more generically, and formulated their own specific questions about the political context, the evidence and the links, etc. They seemed to find it very helpful and by generating their own questions, felt "ownership" of the framework, and were keen to continue to use it.
- We clearly need to find a better way of presenting the framework in training sessions that encourages people to develop their own questions rather than simply answer the example questions in our handouts and training materials.
- We should get together to modify the materials and approach as soon as possible.

How should information be provided?

There is no fixed format for information to be sent to the impact log. Any e-mail can be forwarded to the impact log e-mail address by any member of the team. However, it may be helpful to ask team members to include:

- A short summary of the information in the subject of the message (e.g. "Some positive feedback from workshop X", or "Quality concerns about report Y or Z has agreed to implement our guidelines").
- The source of the information.
- What work or activity it refers to (e.g. "The meeting with the Minister for Labour held on 20 September 2015", or "The project M&E plan").
- A very brief description of what change or absence of change the information indicates.

FIGURE 4
Example of an impact log

Date	Original source	Whose behaviour is changing?	Activity relevant for	Specific activity	Level of impact	Impact demonstrated	E-mail text

Guide to columns

Date: date of receipt of information.

Original source: where the information came from.

Whose behaviour is changing? The stakeholder group whose behaviour is changing (e.g. researchers, policymakers, intermediaries).

Activity relevant for: the activity that the information relates to.

Specific activity: the activity or event that the information relates to (e.g. a publication, workshop, seminar).

Level of impact: for example, is impact changing ideas, approaches, activities, policies (this list can be adjusted as you go along).

Impact demonstrated: key parts of the text that persons submitting the information included as an explanation of what impact they thought was demonstrated.

E-mail text: the key parts of the text from the original e-mail that indicate impact.

Further resources

- Outcome Mapping: www.outcomemapping.ca/download/om%20ideas%206%20-%20AcT.pdf.

6.8 K* framework

What is it and why should I use it?

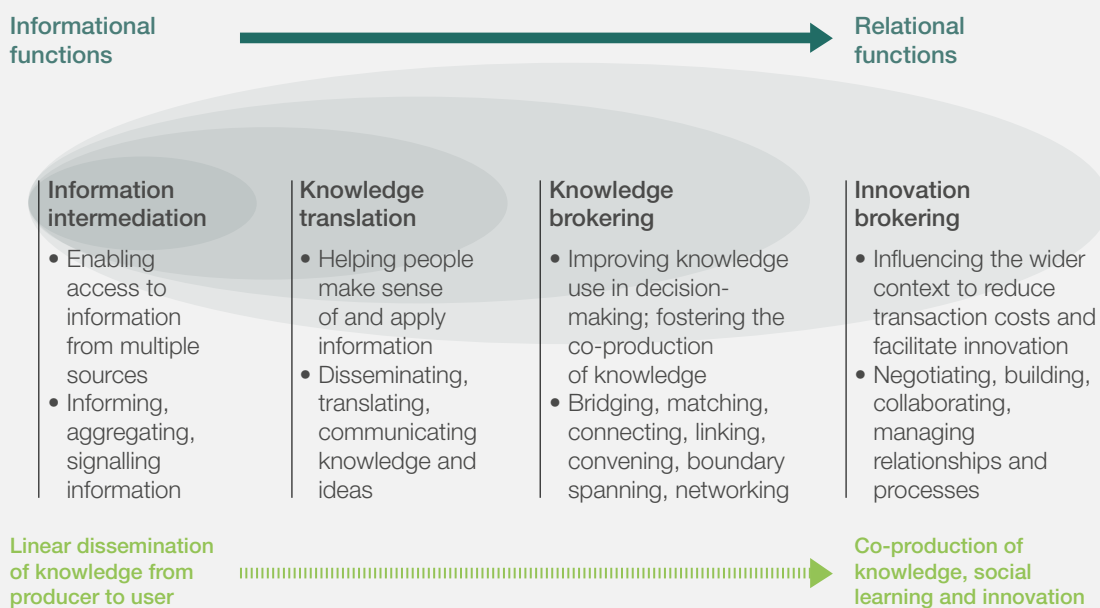
The K* framework provides an understanding of what type of knowledge function IFAD will play during the course of the COSOP or the project, and is therefore more related to defining an appropriate knowledge management strategy (though, as highlighted above, knowledge management is highly linked to policy engagement). It allows IFAD – or projects – to consider how to work together with others. When developing the policy engagement plan, or the policy activities and component, the K* framework may be useful to consider how information is used and how to gain the best traction for policy impact. By applying the framework, it is possible to decide how to work with knowledge.

Some stakeholders (who may be identified from the Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix, or AIIM) will require information that may be difficult for you to provide; therefore, it may be necessary to engage with others who could help you to communicate more effectively. The key use of this framework is to understand that a producer of knowledge may not be in the best position to communicate it to the stakeholder. It may require other stakeholders or organizations that serve a different function to the knowledge.

Expected uses and outcomes

When developing your policy engagement plan, the K* framework may be useful to consider how information is used and how you can gain the best traction for policy impact. This is important when you want to consider your approach to policy engagement. By applying the framework, you can decide how you work with knowledge. Depending on what you find, you may consider that some type of policy work is not possible for you to do alone, so therefore you must partner with others to do this effectively. This framework should explain to you what type of organization to look for when searching for partners.

FIGURE 1
The K* Framework – Functions of knowledge



Source: Shaxson L. (2016). Achieving policy impact: guidance note. London: DFID-ESRC Growth Research Programme and ODI. Available at <http://degrp.squarespace.com/research-impact/>

This exercise can be done quickly by one person or as a group.

K* framework consists of four concentric circles, each representing a different knowledge function.

- The first circle focuses on the first knowledge function, which is an **information intermediary**. This function focuses on enabling access to information from multiple sources. They are often represented as the knowledge producers.
- The second bubble represents **knowledge translators**. Knowledge translators take primary sources of information and look at the implications of the information, often looking for the “so what?” question. Translating the knowledge provides an additional function for the knowledge that is useful for the end users.
- The third bubble focuses on **knowledge brokers**. Organizations that fulfil this role link up the right information with the right issue. This can be a difficult task if the information is not available.
- The last role is an **innovation broker**. Organizations that fulfil this function focus on the co-creation of knowledge, social learning and innovation between knowledge producers and knowledge users.

As you travel to the right of the framework, the relationship between the knowledge producer and the knowledge users increases in intensity.

An important implication of the framework is that each project can only occupy one or a maximum of two knowledge functions at a time. It is difficult for projects and/or organizations to operate at different ends of the spectrum together. Most projects fulfil one or two functions at a time. As a result, when considering your policy engagement plan, it should be important to consider what knowledge function your project is serving.

The steps

Before starting, ensure as a group that you agree on the scope of your project.

1.	<p>Looking at either your project, or your organization’s relationship with knowledge, consider what is your knowledge function.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most organizations and projects generally only occupy one function. • Some organizations may occupy two functions, but the functions are next to each other. • Rarely does an organization or project occupy functions that are not next to each other.
2.	<p>Next consider other organizations in the policy arena.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First find examples of the extremes. What organizations serve as an information intermediary? What organizations serve as an innovation broker? • Next find examples of organizations that serve as knowledge translators and knowledge brokers.

- 3. Reflect upon the questions below to help you think through any refinements and possible next steps.**
- Are there any gaps? Is there a missing function in your policy arena?
 - Is it possible to collaborate with other organizations that fulfil other knowledge functions? Often it is best to work in teams to bring about the greatest probability of impact.
 - Separation of state powers: Do you understand the checks and balances between different branches of government, and between central and local governments? How are different branches of government able to source, interpret evidence differently? What checks and balances are in place to ensure the weaker voices are heard? Does this vary between different state types?
 - Formal and informal political relationships: What are the links between formal and informal political relationships? How do opportunities for public debate affect whether non-elites can express their preferences in decisions? Who has the strongest voice in policy debates?
 - External forces: How do international agreements affect what is debated and implemented by governments? How does this have wider implications for wider evidence bases?
 - Capacity of institutions to absorb change: How do policymakers interact with each other and their capacity to absorb information? What implications are there for possible “policy windows”?
 - Not all questions and issues here will be relevant, but it does ensure that all areas of political analysis are covered, ensuring a more systematic analysis.

Further resources

- Jones, H., N.A. Jones, L. Shaxson and D. Walker. 2012. *Knowledge, Policy and Power in International Development: A Practical Guide*. Policy Press. London: Overseas Development Institute. (www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781447300953)
- UNU-INWEH. 2012. *Expanding Our Understanding of K* (KT,KE, KTT, KMb, KB, KM, etc)*. A concept paper emerging from the K* conference held in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, April 2012. Accessed online: www.gov.uk/dfid-research-outputs/expanding-our-understanding-of-k-kt-ke-ktt-kmb-kb-km-etc-a-concept-paper-emerging-from-the-k-conference-held-in-hamilton-ontario-canada-april-2012

6.9 Political economy analysis²⁸

What is it and why should I use it

Political economy analysis is a powerful tool for improving the effectiveness of aid. Bridging the traditional concerns of politics and economics, it focuses on how power and resources are distributed and contested in different contexts, and the implications for development outcomes. It gets beneath the formal structures to reveal the underlying interests, incentives and institutions that enable or frustrate change. Such insights are important if we are to advance challenging agendas around governance, economic growth and service delivery, which experience has shown do not lend themselves to technical solutions alone.

Political economy analysis is not a magic bullet for the resolution of intractable development problems. However, it can support more effective and politically feasible development strategies, as well as inform more realistic expectations of what can be achieved, and the risks involved. It can also contribute to better results by identifying where the main opportunities and barriers for policy reform exist and how development agencies such as IFAD can use their resources to promote positive change.

There is no single conceptual framework for political economy analysis, but the following **definition from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC)** is useful in capturing some of the main elements:

- *Political economy analysis is concerned with the interaction of political and economic processes in a society: the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time.*

Political economy analysis encourages development practitioners to think **not only about what to support, but also about how to provide support, taking political feasibility into account**. It helps us to understand what drives political behaviour, how this shapes particular policies and programmes, who are the main “winners” and “losers”, and what the implications are for development strategies and programmes. Specifically, it is concerned with understanding:

- The **interests and incentives** facing different groups in society (and particularly political elites), and how these generate particular policy outcomes that may encourage or hinder development.
- The role that **formal institutions (e.g. rule of law, elections) and informal social, political and cultural norms** play in shaping human interaction and political and economic competition.
- The impact of **values and ideas**, including political ideologies, religion and cultural beliefs, on political behaviour and public policy.

In this way, political economy analysis helps us to understand how incentives, institutions and ideas shape political action and policy outcomes. This can be extremely useful when thinking about the feasibility of different approaches to policy engagement.

²⁸ This text draws heavily on “Political Economy Analysis: How to Note”. Department for International Development, 2009; while the annexes are drawn from “An Analytical Framework for Understanding the Political Economy of Sectors and Policy Arenas” ODI, 2005.

Expected outcomes and uses

The use of a political economy approach can be of value in all areas of IFAD's operational work to identify obstacles to change, opportunities and risks. However, it is of particular value in policy engagement, as it can assist projects, and IFAD, to:

- Explain why policy reforms have stalled or why imperfect reforms, or even reforms that are unfavourable to/disadvantageous for smallholder farmers, have been favoured.
- Understanding the interests that drive the different actors in the specific policy processes of interest, and how this informs their position.
- Assess where engagement in policy processes is likely to be welcomed, and where there may be opportunities for policy movement – and conversely, where there is likely to be political obstacles that are likely to limit those opportunities.
- Develop a strategy for engaging in a particular policy process, and an entry point for doing so.
- Identify both the different interest groups around policy change (and their interests), and potential partners in the policy process.
- Enhance dialogue with the government around policy options for delivering improved results.
- Inform strategies of engagement with civil society and the private sector to help overcome policy constraints.

Tools for conducting political economy analysis

In recent years, there has been a rapid expansion of the tools and guidelines used in the field of governance and politics. From the available tools, three major uses of political economy analysis can be distinguished:

- Macro-level country analysis, to enhance general sensitivity to country context and understanding of the broad political-economy environment.
- Sector-level analysis, to identify specific barriers and opportunities within particular sectors.
- Problem-driven analysis, geared to understanding and resolving a particular problem at the project level, or in relation to a specific policy issue.

Of particular interest to IFAD are the two latter uses.

(i) Sector-level analysis. Political economy analysis at the sector level can be particularly useful in **helping to explain why reforms in areas such as agriculture, or education, health and roads, have stalled**; what incentives and constraints influence politicians, civil servants and other reformers in these sectors; and how donors might engage to facilitate policy change. Almost all sector tools involve an initial mapping of key stakeholders.

Once the key stakeholders have been identified, the next step is to identify who are the most influential actors, what are their interests and incentives, and how do these shape overall dynamics of the sector, including the feasibility of proposed policy reforms. Some key questions to consider when conducting political economy analysis of a sector are highlighted in Box 1.

Following the completion of the analysis, it is then important to consider where the potential entry points for donor engagement might be and how an intervention might be appropriately sequenced to deliver the best results. This requires an assessment of the feasibility of objectives in relation to sector reform and options for working with reform champions, where they exist,

BOX 1**Sample questions for conducting sector-level political economy analysis**

Roles and responsibilities: Who are the key stakeholders in the sector? What are the formal and informal roles and mandates of different players? What is the balance between central/local authorities in provision of services?

Ownership structure and financing: What is the balance between public and private ownership? How is the sector financed (e.g. public/private partnerships, user fees, taxes, donor support)?

Power relations: To what extent is power vested in the hands of specific individuals/groups? How do different interest groups outside government (e.g. private sector, NGOs, consumer groups, the media) seek to influence policy?

Historical legacies: What is the past history of the sector, including previous reform initiatives? How does this influence current stakeholder perceptions?

Corruption and rent-seeking: Is there significant corruption and rent-seeking in the sector? Where is this most prevalent (e.g. at point of delivery, procurement, allocation of jobs)? Who benefits most from this? How is patronage being used?

Service delivery: Who are the primary beneficiaries of service delivery? Are particular social, regional or ethnic groups included/excluded? Are subsidies provided, and which groups benefit most from these?

Ideologies and values: What are the dominant ideologies and values that shape views around the sector? To what extent may these serve to constrain change?

Decision-making: How are decisions made within the sector? Who is party to these decision-making processes?

Implementation issues: Once made, are decisions implemented? Where are the key bottlenecks in the system? Is failure to implement due to lack of capacity or other political-economy reasons?

Potential for reform: Who are likely to be the “winners” and “losers” from particular reforms? Are there any key reform champions within the sector? Who is likely to resist reforms and why? Are there “second best” reforms that might overcome this opposition?

Sources: ODI Analytical Framework for Conducting Political Economy Analysis in Sectors; World Bank Problem Driven Governance and Political Economy Analysis.

or a broader constituency of interest groups outside government, where they do not. While the operational implications will not always be clear-cut, having mapped the sector and analysed the key political-economy trends, donors are in a better position to design sectoral interventions that are both technically sound and politically feasible.

A specific and more detailed tool that can be used is the Analytical Framework for Understanding the Political Economy of Sectors, which expands on the questions shown in Box 1 and uses three checklists of questions to understand the organizations in the sector, the nature of the relationship between them, and their influence on the policymaking process. These are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3 at the end of this section.

(ii) Problem-driven analysis. Political economy analysis can also be deployed to **enhance understanding and resolve a particular problem at the project level, or in relation to a specific policy issue**, which may cut across a number of sectors. The World Bank has been at the forefront of work to develop a “problem driven framework to governance and political economy analysis”, which it defines as being “focused on specific issues and challenges rather

FIGURE 1
Problem-driven framework

What vulnerabilities/challenges?		Evidence of poor outcomes to which governance and political economy weaknesses appear to contribute.	For example: repeated failure to adopt sector reform and poor sector outcomes; continuous food insecurity; corruption continues to undermine the business climate even after anti-corruption law.
Governance and Political Economy Analysis	Institutional and governance arrangements and capacities	What are the associated institutional set-up and governance arrangements?	Mapping of relevant branches of government, ministries, agencies and their interaction. Existing laws and regulations. Policy processes (formal rules and de facto).
	Political economy drivers	Why are things this way? Why are policies or institutional arrangements not being improved?	Analysis of stakeholders, incentives, rents/rent distribution, historical legacies and prior experiences with reforms, social trends and forces (e.g. ethnic tensions), and how they shape current stakeholder positions and actions.

Source: World Bank Problem-Driven Governance and Political Economy.

than developing broad overviews, in order to generate operationally relevant findings and implications". It is emphasized that "problem-driven" does not mean focusing exclusively on areas of difficulty, but also identifying opportunities and learning from where success has been achieved.

This framework encourages users to distinguish between three layers, shown in Figure 1:

- identifying the problem, issue or vulnerability to be addressed;
- mapping out the institutional and governance weaknesses that underpin the problem; and
- drilling down to the political economy drivers that constrain or support progressive change.

The advantage of the problem-driven approach is that it encourages users to delve deeper to understand why a specific problem has not been successfully addressed. In this way, it can help practitioners think about feasible policy and institutional reforms to overcome particular obstacles, and in so doing promote better development results.

Process and methodology

Political economy analysis should be viewed as a dynamic process rather than a static output.

The measure of success is not the conduct of the study itself, but the extent to which findings are integrated into COSOPs and projects, and ultimately contribute to improved results on the ground. Ideally, political economy analysis should become integral to country programming with knowledge being continuously updated over time and fed back into programming.

While political economy analysis is not a hard science, guarantees of rigour and objectivity are important, and the analysis should follow some principles for conducting research. One key principle is the importance of triangulating data by drawing on as many sources of information as possible. This includes primary data sources, such as academic research, other donor assessments, official documents (laws, regulations, organizational strategies), public opinion surveys and media reporting.

However, in many cases, key information about the political-economy context will not be readily available in written form, and more in-depth qualitative research with key stakeholders will be required. A range of techniques can be employed to build up a picture of the political-economy environment from local stakeholders (e.g. politicians, civil servants, business people, the media and NGOs). This includes face-to-face interviews with key informants, focus group meetings and stakeholder analysis workshops. The research should seek to ensure that the views of a representative sample of interviewees from different regions and ethnic/religious/social backgrounds are fully reflected.

Table 1: Intrasectoral analysis of organizations in a sector – selected questions

	Roles, mandates, responsibilities	Organizational structure	Management, leadership, composition
Basic questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the official status, the role and the mandate of the organization (explicit and implicit)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the organization structured: central to the local level? How much control (stated and real) do local levels have over: (i) budget allocation; (ii) agenda setting; or (iii) regulation, and why? What is the horizontal structure of the organization (departments and key committees)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the key actors (prominent and hidden)? What is the basis for membership within the organization (formal and informal) and what levels of “accessibility” are there to becoming a member?
Historical legacies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did this organization function in the past? How much influence do past roles and responsibilities have on current mandate (official and unofficial)? To what extent (and how) did it operate in the interests of the poor? How do these legacies affect the poor? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the historical basis for the organizational structure that exists? Do legacies of previous systems remain? How are they manifested, and with what consequences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the historical basis for the leadership and management structure that exists? How does “history” explain who the key actors are and the composition of the organization (formal and informal)? How influential are these historical legacies and in what parts of the organization? What are the varying implications for policy?
Structural factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do factors such as level of development, social composition of the area/ organization, geography and resource base affect: (i) the boundaries that the organization sets itself; and (ii) how it perceives its mandate? How do these structural factors affect: (i) power relations; (ii) dominant ideologies and values and; (iii) the priority (unofficial and official) that is given to the poor? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effectively does the structure of the organization reflect, and respond to, different geographical demands and contexts; varying levels of development; and differing ethnic, political religious constituencies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the main political/ ethnic, religious, etc., factions within the organization and what are the implications for policymaking and policy implementation? How do factors such as level of development/ concentration of resources affect: (i) the composition of the organization; and (ii) the power balance? How durable are the structural factors and what are the implications for change?

Financing and spending	Incentives and motivation	Capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the balance between financing from the central/ subnational levels and from the cost-recovery/revenue collection? How transparent, effective and legitimate are the systems of revenue capture? • What is the level of dependence on external aid or funding? To what extent is the organization financed through rents from natural resources? What are the main patterns of (and reasons for) spending and levels of taxation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the opportunities for career progression and what are the main factors that affect this? What is the level and distribution of remuneration and salaries for staff in the organization? What are the systems and standards for recruitment (official and unofficial)? Are there non-monetary methods for motivating staff? How effective are these? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do resource, capacity and skill levels vary across the organization (including among managers and leaders), and with what consequences? Does the nature of the sector affect the capacity for implementation? What degree and type of training/ experience do the members of the organizations have in terms of subject area and theoretical base? How adequate is the information base for evidence-based policymaking? To what extent is research linked into policy?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the organization financed in the past? What were the previous taxation methods and spending priorities? What were the consequences for the poor? Do these past methods and priorities influence current policies? If so, where and how? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the official/unofficial bases for entry and career progression in the past? Do legacies of these previous systems remain and with what consequences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the historical reasons for the variations in resource and capacity levels? How lasting are these legacies, and what are the implications for change?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do structural factors, such as the level of economic development, demographic patterns, geography and the natural resource base, influence the methods of financing and the choice of spending priorities? What are the prospects for change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do structural factors, such as the level of economic development, influence the types and quality of incentives, and systems for motivating staff? What are the prospects for change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do structural factors, such as level of development and spatial variation, affect capacity and skill levels and what are the implications for policy and for donor roles?

	Roles, mandates, responsibilities	Organizational structure	Management, leadership, composition
Change processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have there been changes in roles, mandate/responsibilities: (i) of the organization; and (ii) of key players? How has reform evolved in the sector? What have been the main changes in political discourse? What were the reasons for those changes and how effective were they? What are the prospects for change, in what direction, and with what consequences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How has the organizational structure changed over time, and why? What do these transitions suggest for the sustainability and effectiveness of the current system? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How have the leadership/management structure and composition of the organization changed over time? How have periods of crises affected these changes? What, given the organization and political context, are the prospects for medium/long-term change?
Power relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do the organizations' explicit and implicit objectives reflect and affect the nature and source of its power (e.g. through revenue-raising, patronage opportunities, or as a controller of the resource)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is power balanced in different parts of the organization, and why? Who has gained and lost by changes in the organizational structure? To what extent do those who have gained and lost support/resist: (i) change; and (ii) the organization's objectives? Has the organization appeased the losers, and with what consequences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do those in "formal" positions of authority exercise power? To what extent do prominent and less-visible actors and stakeholders influence those in leadership positions, and how? To what extent is power vested in personalities, and with what consequences? How are different groups included, excluded or adversely incorporated into different parts of the organization, and with what policy consequences?
Ideologies, values, perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the predominant values, ideologies, narratives and perceptions in the organization regarding key sectoral issues and objectives? What are the sources of these narratives? Who holds/defends them? Are these ideologies consistent or inconsistent with the prevailing political ideologies? How do varying ideological positions affect official/unofficial views of the organizations' roles/mandate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do ideologies, values and perceptions affect the design of organizational structure? For example, do the prevailing ideologies support a consensual organization structure or one with a strong central direction? How ingrained are these ideologies and values, and among whom? To what extent have they affected change processes? To what extent do ideologies differ across the organization and sector and what openings/blocks do these provide? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do ideologies, values and perceptions influence the criteria (official and unofficial) for leadership and management within the organization? How do ideologies and values influence who the key actors are and the composition of the organization? How do differing ideological positions explain and predict pockets of resistance or support for: (i) management and leadership; and (ii) policy?

Financing and spending	Incentives and motivation	Capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How have the sources of financing, methods of taxation and spending priorities changed over time, and why? How have these changes affected different categories of the poor? How do current spending patterns, methods of taxation and financing fit in with broader change processes, and what are the implications for their sustainability and effectiveness? How much budget certainty is there? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How have the methods for providing incentives and motivating staff changed over time? How do current systems fit in with broader change processes, and what are the implications for their sustainability and effectiveness? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How have resource and capacity levels changed over time, and in whose interests? What are the prospects for change in different parts of the organization, and in what directions? Do the possible changes offer new spaces for engagement?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the level of dependence on external aid/rents from natural resources, etc., affect the organization's capacity in policymaking and implementation and agenda setting? What effect do various sources of revenue have on policymaking and on accountability and responsiveness to the poor? Who has gained and lost from changes in the methods of taxation and spending priorities? Who controls public procurement? How do these differing constituencies seek to influence policy, and with what consequences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who has benefited and lost from changes in entry requirements and the incentive structure? What are the implications for support and resistance to the organization's objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what degree does this organization have the power to define and implement policy? How strong is political capacity? For example, in the ability to negotiate between social interest groups and to organize and mobilize support? What is the source of this capacity? Are these "sources" considered legitimate, and by whom? How do the varying perceptions explain and predict resistance or support?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do the prevailing ideologies, values and perceptions influence spending priorities, taxation methods and other sources of financing? What are the consequences for differing categories of the poor? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are systems for recruitment and progression regarded as transparent? Which are the main groups or factions who are seen to benefit from the incentive systems, and why? How do these perceptions explain and predict pockets of resistance and support within the organization? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do ideologies, values and perceptions explain: (i) the priority that is given to evidence-based policymaking; (ii) the emphasis, research and training; (iii) how political capacity is defined; and (iv) how capacity is exercised, by whom and for what purposes? What are the policy implications?

Table 2: Nature of the relationship between players – suggested questions

Relationships between and across sectors	What are the various (competing and other) jurisdictions within and across the sectors? What are the sources of any competing claims? What are the different influences over, and interaction with, the sector ministries? What are the historical, structural, ideological or other reasons for this? How do these relationships influence: (i) the mandate/responsibilities; and (ii) the mandate/responsibilities of the other sectors? What is the attitude of different players to other sectors: symbiotic or hostile, and over what issues? How have relationships across sectors changed over time, and why? How do policy changes in other sectors affect this sector? Where are there blocks to collaboration and possibilities for alliances? What, given known trends, are the likely policy consequences?
Relationships with state institutions, customary or traditional authorities	How does this ministry relate to the Ministry of Finance/Ministry of Planning and Investment/central government/the military? What is its relative power in these relationships? How does this influence its mandate/responsibilities? What expectations of the state are there, and what is the basis for these expectations? How much influence do customary authorities have, and with what policy consequences?
Relationships with political parties, leaders and socio-political organizations	What are the main political links of the organizations in the sector and what are the historical reasons for these links? What is the profile of sector issues in politics and election agendas? What are the dominant political ideologies and their sources? To what extent do these influence sector policies? To what extent are sectoral issues associated with patronage/identity/leaders' political projects (such as modernization, national security and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) and what are the consequences? How accessible are political structures? To what extent do differing organizations within the sector influence the political sphere? What is the nature of their influence: for example, as source of financing; as electoral constituency; personal advantage to politicians; as opinion formers; as threats to governability or legitimacy; and what does this mean for the organization or the sector?
Relationship with donors, international non-governmental organizations (INGO) and foreign interests	What is the degree of harmonization and policy consensus (for example, the existence of sector-wide approaches among donors)? Where are there areas of discord, and why? What is the nature of the links between donors and the (i) sector; and (ii) differing organizations within the sector? How much influence (financial, ideological, technical, managerial) do various donors and foreign interests have within and across sectors, and why? How has the focus/agendas of donors, INGOs and foreign interests changed over time? What have been the consequences for the sector? Is there a tension between government and donor perceptions of poverty?

Relationship with academia, research institutes and think tanks	Who are the main consultants used (research institutes, academia, etc.)? What are their party-political (and other) links or key personal relationships? What source of funding do these institutes receive (government, donor or private sector), and how does this affect their position? To what degree are policy recommendations based on evidence?
Relationship with the media	What is the attitude of the media and popular culture to sectoral issues? How much influence does the media have? To what extent does the media act in the interests of political leaders, other constituencies? How has the media's role changed over time, and with what consequences for the poor? To what extent does/ can the media demand accountability from the sector? What, given known trends, is the media's likely role in the medium and long term?
Relationship with the private sector	What are the main links between this sector and the private sector? What are the main party political relationships and interests in the private sector? What is the degree of regulation and competition within the sector, both in terms of markets and service providers? What is the character and the value of the industry? Where are the main markets located, and what implications does this have for understanding the sector?
Relationship with mass movements and collective action: non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations	What are the main interest lobbies? What are the main common interest alliances that occur: e.g. rural rich and rural poor allied against urban bias? How regionally specific are various subgroups of the organization or movement? What notions of "deserving" and "undeserving" poor are there, and what are the reasons for certain attitudes and ideologies? How do these notions affect different categories of the poor? (For example, are some categories excluded from mass movements/collective action? Is there stratification with the movements?)
Relationship with "unorganized" citizens and different categories of the poor	To what degree are the poor able to engage in collective action and to form coalitions? Do sectoral issues feature as foci of public protest, mobilization or everyday resistance? What are the differing perceptions of poverty? Are these consistent/inconsistent among key groups and individuals, such as leaders, service providers? What are the implications: for (i) policy; and (ii) differing groups and subgroups of the poor?

Table 3: How players influence the policymaking process – suggested questions

	Policymaking: formulation, negotiation and implementation	Responsiveness and channels of accountability
Basic issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The formal and informal rules for policymaking and implementation. For example, how are the organization's objectives defined? How are legislation and regulations made? What are the budgeting process and procedures (committees and vertical consultation)? • The policy networks within, and across, sectors? • What is the influence of leadership, management on the content and direction of policy? • What is the influence of dominant or prominent personalities? • The effect that the nature of these mechanisms has? • The degree to which outcomes are shaped through implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal (vertical and horizontal) mechanisms for accountability: (i) within the sector; and (ii) for sector objectives and responsibilities. • Methods of evaluation, consultation, participation and inclusion, and the way in which citizens are involved in policy monitoring (referendum, opinion surveys). The accessibility of these methods. External accountability mechanisms (political, parliamentary, fiscal, administrative). • The constituency to whom is the organization accountable. The powers that other actors have to scrutinize this organization. • Methods for communicating policy and the degree of information flow, upwards and downwards flow (e.g. publication of policies and rights, use of ethnic languages and accessibility of this information). • The level of freedom of expression in the organization, including whether or not issues widely discussed in the media
Historical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical legacies and basis for the rules and procedures that exist: implications for policymaking and implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture-specific understandings or expectations of the state. • Differing understandings/standards for accountability. • The degree to which accountability mechanisms focus on accountability to the elite.
Structural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way in which the policy process is affected or determined by structural factors, such as the nature of the market and dominant methods of production. • Regional variations in attitudes to policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way in which structural factors such as the level of development or the skills base affect the ability of citizens to make demands on the state. • The level of capacity of lower levels to carry out consultation.
Change processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for shifts in trends in policymaking processes, and implications for policy. • Key elements and phases of the policy cycle. • Policy disruptions and the role of crises (e.g. adverse macroeconomic situations, natural disasters). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The emergence of new and significant movements, parties or factions. • Reactions to policy change. • The role of protest and other unpredictable events in policy negotiation. • The flexibility and the ability of the policy process to react to unforeseen events and adapt to change.

	Policymaking: formulation, negotiation and implementation	Responsiveness and channels of accountability
Power relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key actors (prominent and hidden) in policymaking and implementation; type and level of influence. • How these actors (including different groups within and across the sector) exert influence, and what are the policy consequences. • How power relations influence policy negotiation processes. • How policy is distorted or renegotiated during implementation. • The role of street-level bureaucracies and the extent to which policy is renegotiated by everyday forms of resistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do relationships (including levels of accountability and responsiveness) differ depending on the sector/service provider and the category of citizen/client? • The extent to which political accountability (at both national and sector levels) is based on patronage or on expectations of universal, predictable and contestable rights? • Extent to which, and through which channels, differing categories of the poor influence policymaking and implementation? (Note that it is important to disaggregate among the poor in order to assess who is benefiting, why different forms of poverty persist, exclusions/ adverse terms of incorporation?) • The accessibility of appeal processes. • The spaces that exist for contestation and negotiation.
Ideologies, values, perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where, within and across the sectors, are there conflicts and correspondence in ideologies and values: policy consequences and implications. • The main influences on policy formulation and the predominant values, narratives and perceptions in the organization regarding key sectoral issues and objectives. The source of these narratives. • The (mis) match between policy rhetoric and policy content and outcomes. • How external agencies influence ideas and perceptions of poverty; how ideas differ across donor and development agencies, and with what consequences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of state-society relations, including degree to which different groups perceive themselves as grateful recipients of state services or as having a rightful claim on the state. • Views, ideologies and perceptions among the less active/prominent associations, uncivil and unruly civil society groups, opposition groups; how these groups express their views and consequences for policymaking and policy implementation. • How the more influential groups (including the behind-the-scenes players) within the sector view the poor; how these key actors express and defend their views.

6.10 Problem tree analysis

What is it and why should I use it?

Often one of the reasons why it may be difficult to have a policy engagement strategy is that we do not have a clear enough understanding of the central problem. A problem tree analysis helps to identify the root cause of the problem by identifying the focal problem (the trunk) and then asking questions to determine the causes of the problem and the consequences, **helping to focus IFAD's policy engagement on core issues**. The exercise can help to break down the problem into manageable chunks and identify the interconnected aspects, feedback loops or contradictory elements in order to prioritize specific actions that need to be taken. The heart of the exercise is the discussion that is generated as factors are arranged and rearranged.

Expected uses and outcomes

The exercise can help to break down the problem into manageable chunks to ensure that the problem is better understood. Clarifying the problem may help to prioritize specific actions that need to be taken. The problem tree analysis (also known as the situational analysis) can help to find solutions by mapping out the causes and the effects around a particular issue, almost like a mind map. In conducting further analysis of the problem, you may find that a problem often has interconnected aspects, feedback loops or contradictory elements. You may decide that you would like to carry out further research to gather more evidence, or to clarify some of the hypotheses you are proposing.

A problem tree analysis can be done by one person, but can also be done in a group brainstorming together. Conducting the exercise in a group can help produce a common understanding of the common goal, and what the team's strategy is to attacking the goal. If working in a group, a small group of about six to eight people will allow everyone to access the flipchart paper.

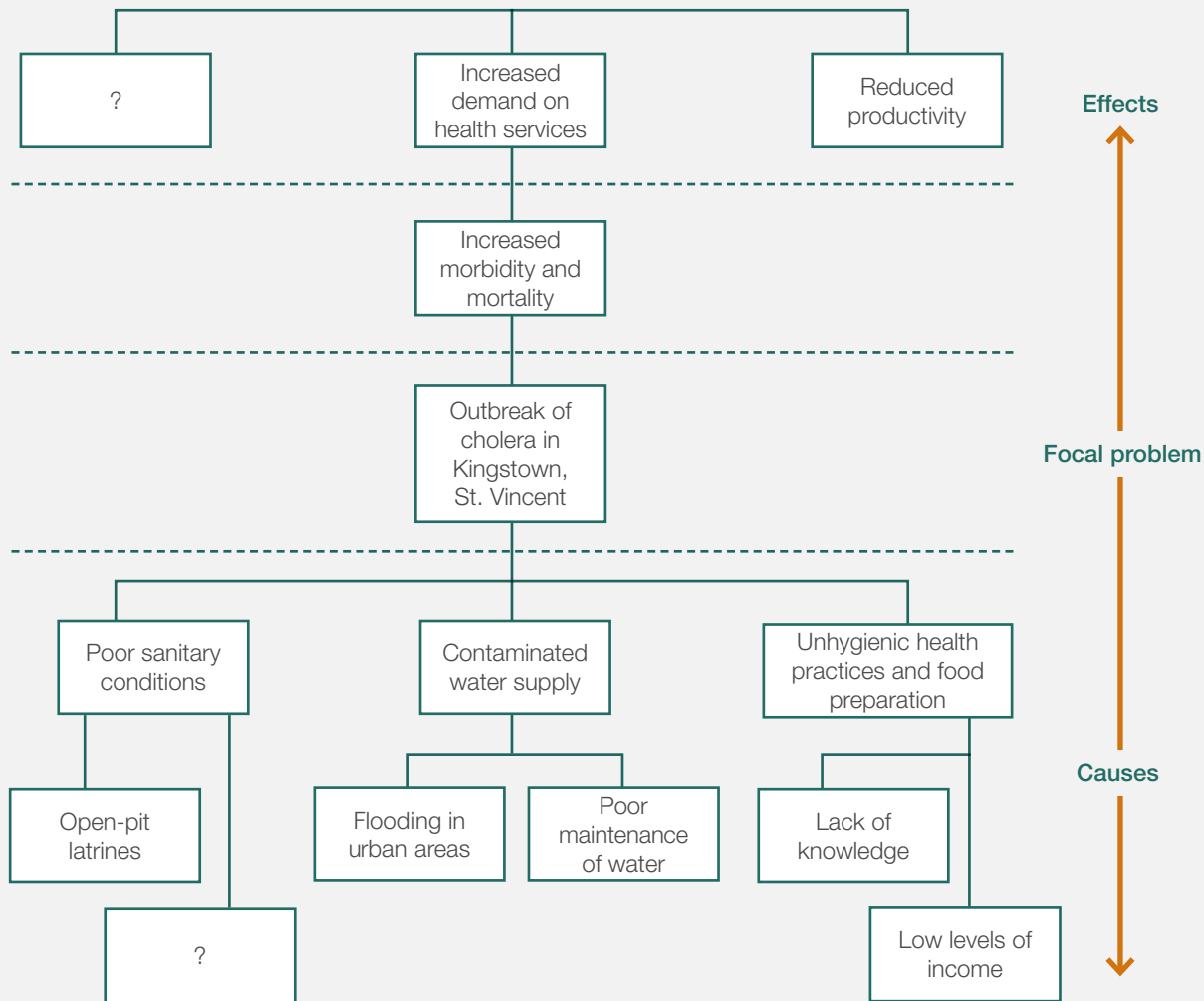
The tool

The key to the exercise is discussion, debate and dialogue to generate factors that are arranged and rearranged to form dividing roots and branches like a mind map. It may take time for people to explain their thoughts and to record certain ideas and points.

A problem tree first focuses on a focal problem as the trunk of the tree. The group then identifies all the causes of the focal problem. These can be multiple factors and therefore represent the roots of the problem. Next all the consequences of the problem are identified as the effects. These are also shown as the branches of the tree.

What the results might look like

FIGURE 1
Example of a problem tree analysis



Source: Tsui, J. et al., 2013.

The steps

1.	<p>Discuss and agree on the problem or issue to be analyzed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write the problem or issue in the centre of the flipchart. This becomes the “trunk” of the tree and the “focal problem”.
2.	<p>Identify the causes of the focal problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These become the roots below it. • There may be feedback loops. Make sure your diagram represents the complexity.
3.	<p>Identify the consequences and effects of the focal problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These become the branches above the problem. • Then identify the effects. These may lead to other issues.
4	<p>Reflect upon the questions below to help you think through any refinements and possible next steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the exercise, discussions and debates may start. Are you able to address any of these questions? • Does your problem tree represent the reality? Are the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions of the problem considered? • What causes and consequences are getting better? Which are getting worse and which are staying the same? • What are the most serious consequences that need to be addressed? Which are the most concern? What criteria are important for us to be thinking about a way forward? • What causes are easier or most difficult to address? What possible solutions or options might there be? Where could there be a policy change to help address a cause or consequence or create a solution? • What decisions have we made, what actions have we agreed on?

Further resources

For more information, you can find the exercises here:

- Problem Tree Analysis (2009) Research and Policy in Development. Accessible online: www.odi.org/publications/5258-problem-tree-analysis.
- Mind Maps: www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/188.pdf.
- Overseas Development Institute guide, pp. 25-26: www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/194.pdf.
- Or refer to Tools 1 and 2 (Problem and Solution Trees) in this 2007 Christian Aid-CAFOD-Trocaire policy monitoring toolkit (pp. 8-9): www.trocaire.org/sites/trocaire/files/resources/policy/monitoring-government-policies-toolkit.pdf.

6.11 RAPID Outcome Assessment

What is it and why should I use it?

The RAPID Outcome Assessment (ROA) is a learning methodology to assess and map the contribution of a project's actions on a particular change in policy or the policy environment. It is a flexible and visual tool that can be used in conjunction with other evaluation tools and methods. ROA focuses on describing the context, the project, the key actors and their behaviours; how this changed over time and what influences the project has had over key behaviour change.

Expected uses and outcomes

ROA helps to understand why specific changes in policy or the policy environment arose and this may lead to lessons that can help to understand how future changes might be influenced. These lessons may produce insights that can usefully be fed into changes in the strategic plan or action plan.

As the findings can be used to produce stories, it may be possible to write these up to be used in annual reports and circulated to members or produced for the media. Appendix 6.13 on stories of change provides guidance on writing stories.

The tool

The ROA methodology has three main stages (Leksmono et al., 2006). The first stage is a preparation stage, during which a document review and a series of informal conversations are carried out to develop a draft picture of the project's history and the intended changes. The second stage can be conducted as a workshop during which key policy change processes are identified by the stakeholders. The third stage involves a follow-up process that allows country programme managers to refine the stories of change, identifying key policy actors, events and their contribution to change. From this description, you can see that this tool incorporates several others.

The steps

ROA is best carried out by a group who has been involved in the same event or programme. A small group of two or three people could conduct the analysis.

Stage 1: Background research and preparation

1. Review background information on the project and the policy environment before and after the project.

- For example, project reports, project papers and research products, newspaper references/articles, relevant literature.
- This will contribute to a basic understanding of the situation.

2. Have conversations with relevant project staff and stakeholders.

- To contribute to step 1 and to identify overall policy objectives, the key actors and events that were targeted and the range of strategies used.

Stage 2: The ROA workshop

Constructing the map in a group will ensure you consider the full range of people and organizations that need to be included. Listen to different members of the group's opinions and tease out reasoning for why people consider causes or events to be relevant.

1. Discuss and identify your project's time line.

- For example, when it started and key points or phases during its lifetime.

2. Put the sheet of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe.

3. Draw the time line across the top of the paper.



4. Referring to your policy objective, write down all the stakeholders you can think of on post-it notes (one stakeholder per post-it).

- Be as specific as possible (i.e. do not just write “donors”, name them, one per post-it).
- Do not be limited to one post-it note per organization. If different teams or people have different degrees of alignment, then separate them.

5. Place these vertically on the left of the map (highlighted in the table below).

- As people place their post-it note on the map (highlighted in the table below in the boundary partner (BP) column), they should explain to the group why they are putting it in that position.
- This may lead to discussion – which is good.
- If the project is working in more than one country, or at both the national and international levels, the vertical axis can identify different countries if there are interrelationships between them. If the events in the countries are distinct, it is best to do an ROA map for each.



6. Describe the behaviour of the stakeholders on post-it notes.

- Describe the behaviour that contributed to the change in the policy environment or policy.
- Describe the behaviour at the beginning of the timescale or project.

7. Place these vertically on the left and right of the map.

- As people place their post-it note on the map (highlighted in the table below in the Before and Today column), they should explain to the group why they are putting it in that position.

	BP	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Policy environment	BP1	0											
	BP2	0											
	BP3	0											
	BP4	0											
	BP5	0											
	BP6	0											
	BP7	0											
	Project												
EE													
													Policy change

8. Write down the key changes in behaviour for each of the stakeholders you can think of (one change per post-it).

- Each number represents a particular change in behaviour.

	Before	year/month										Today		
BP	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Policy environment	BP1	0	1	2, 3, 4									5	
	BP2	0		1					2, 3					4
	BP3	0		1	2					3	4, 5, 6	7		8
	BP4	0		1	2	3	4	5	6					7
	BP5	0					1	2	3					4
	BP6	0								6, 7, 8				9
	BP7	0		1, 2	3, 4, 5							1, 2		3
	Project													
EE														
														Policy change

9. Add two further rows to the table.

- One for the key changes in the project, including organizational changes, outputs and changes in behaviour.
- The second for external influences, including actions of strategic partners and other exogenous partners.

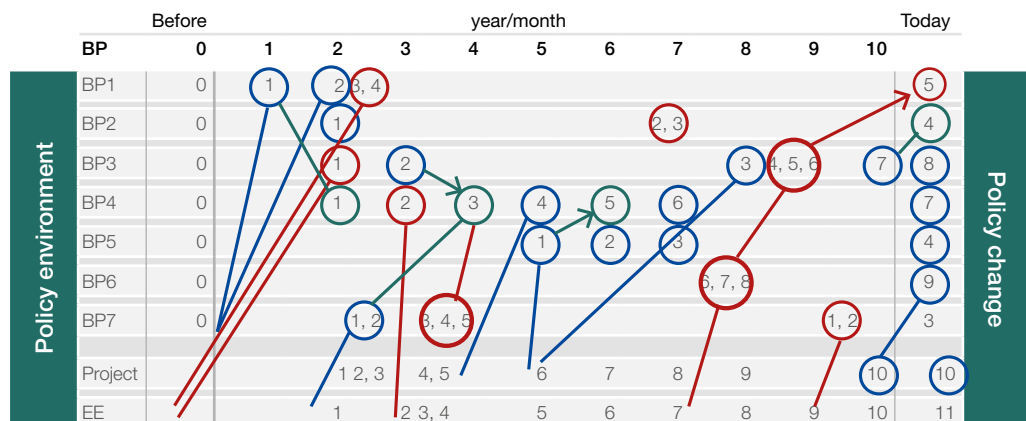
	Before	year/month										Today		
BP	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Policy environment	BP1	0	1	2, 3, 4									5	
	BP2	0		1					2, 3					4
	BP3	0		1	2					3	4, 5, 6	7		8
	BP4	0		1	2	3	4	5	6					7
	BP5	0					1	2	3					4
	BP6	0								6, 7, 8				9
	BP7	0		1, 2	3, 4, 5							1, 2		3
	Project			1, 2, 3	4, 5		6	7	8	9				10
	EE			1	2, 3, 4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11

10. Rank the influence of the changes by scoring them from 1 (least influence) to 10 (highest influence).

- Rate the influence of project on the changes in behaviour of the stakeholders.
- Rate the influence of external influences on the changes in behaviour of the stakeholders and the project.

11. Draw arrows and lines in different colours to link connected changes.

- Pick those that are most important to your project. Five or six is enough.
- Each of these arrows represents a potential influencing strategy to be considered for the future. Where links are strong, draw solid lines; and where weak, draw dotted lines.
- Each person identifying a link should explain to the group why he or she thinks this is the case.
- This should stimulate either agreement or discussion from the group.



Stage 3: Refine and triangulate conclusions

1. Summarize by outlining the main external events and who was involved.

- This will stimulate a process of verifying and refining the findings by the group.

2. Identify informants to follow up with in-depth interviews.

- This will help to confirm the linkages and influences determined in the workshop and to assess the nature of the contributions to change.

What the results might look like

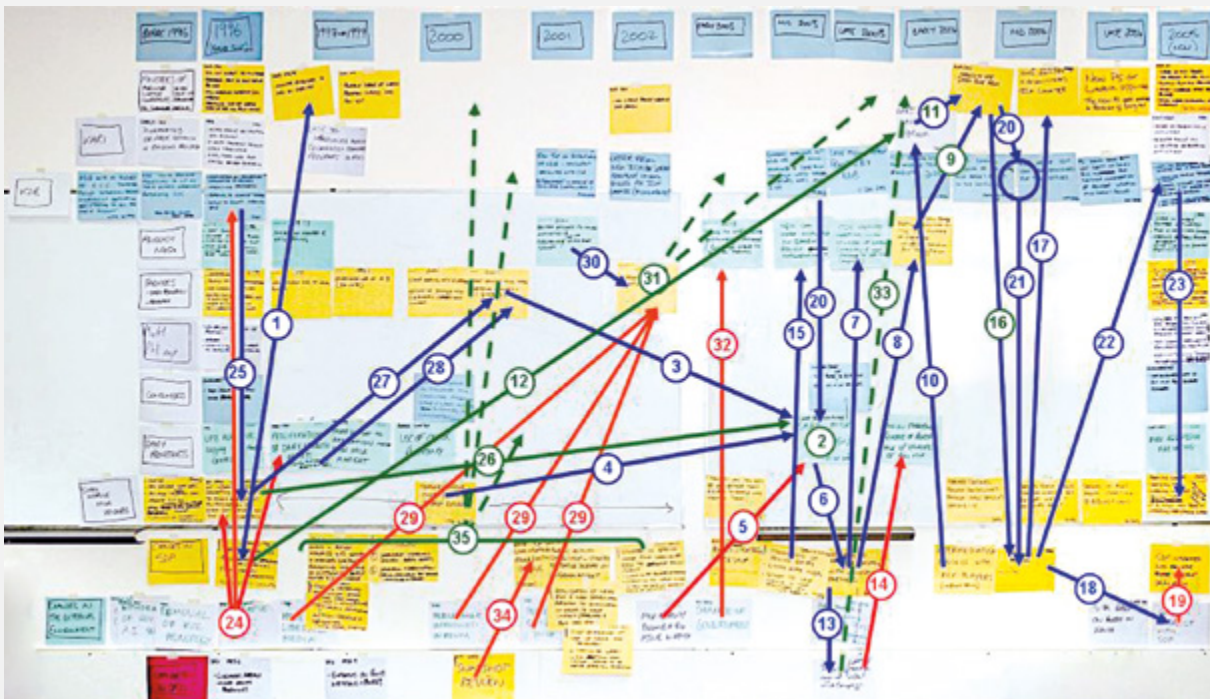
Figure 1 shows workshop participants developing the ROA map. Figure 2 shows an example of a completed ROA map. Time runs from left (start of the initiative) to right (current day). Each horizontal line represents a different policy or intermediary actor (e.g. media). The boxes in each line describe observed, verified changes that have occurred among those actors. The bottom two lines represent the project activities and the external environment. The lines were added during the workshop to indicate causes. Each line is backed up with a statement providing the rationale behind the causal link.

FIGURE 1
Participants developing an ROA map



Source: Overseas Development Institute, Research and Policy in Development, 2017.

FIGURE 2
Example of a completed ROA map



Source: Overseas Development Institute, Research and Policy in Development programme, 2017.

Further resources

- RAPID outcome assessment: www.odi.org/publications/6800-rapid-outcome-assessment.
- Leksmono C., J. Young, N. Hooton, H. Muriuki and D. Romney (2006). *Informal Traders Lock Horns with the Formal Milk Industry: The role of research in pro-poor dairy policy shift in Kenya*. Working Paper 266. Overseas Development Institute: London.

6.12 Stories of change

What are they and why should I use them?

Stories are a good way to present information about the change the country-level policy engagement (CLPE) work is making. To do this, already-available information (such as an impact log or evaluation reports) is turned into a narrative. The story of change can be used to narrate a process, an entire project or about one part of a project. The sorts of changes that might be documented are changes in policy or shifts in the way a policy issue is talked about or engaged with. By transforming facts into stories, it is more likely that people will read, learn and pass on what has been learned or achieved. They add colour and life to descriptions of change. Stories of change are also good for communicating learning to broader audiences, for example, online or in an annual report.

Expected uses and outcomes

You can write a story of change individually, in small groups or in a workshop. If you are doing it in a group, it is good to have a variety of people present, including project implementers and communications and monitoring and evaluation staff. How you choose to write and present your story depends on what you intend to do with it. If you want to share your story with external audiences, you will want to make sure it is well written and presented (talk to your communications team as early as possible if you want to do this). If the process of writing the story is more important – for internal learning perhaps – then taking informal notes may be enough. You can also tell stories about policy change that *did not* happen. Again, using a story can help to share learning about what did not work and why. Whatever the use, stories of change are best kept short (two to four pages) and written in simple narrative.

The tool

Your story of change will describe:

- **The situation before your policy influence.**
- **What is happening now** (in terms of the way policy change is being sought).
- **When the change happened or did not happen.**
- **Why the change happened or did not happen** (what you think the cause of the change was).
- **How the change happened** (the factors influencing change and what your contribution was).
- **What lessons you have learned.**

Remember, it is a *story* of change, so make it engaging. Think about writing an appealing title; set the scene in time and location; describe your “characters”; describe the challenge – what triggered your action; describe your turning point – the moment when change happens; and describe your resolution – including any lessons or key messages. Also, using photographs or other visual aids can be a powerful tool in storytelling.

The steps

Before starting, it is important to be clear about why you are writing your story of change. If this is not clear, think about the following:

- **Why you want to tell a story of change** (e.g. because you have observed a positive change and want to tell people about it; because you have observed lack of change and want to explore why; because you want to learn from project experiences; or because you want to communicate learning with others).

- **What do you plan to do with your story** (e.g. circulate it within the team; publish it on your website; include it in your annual report; or send it to the project donor)?

If working in a group:

1. Put a sheet of flipchart paper on the wall and appoint a scribe.

- You may need more sheets of paper as you go.

2. Discuss possible areas for a story and choose one.

- Be as specific as possible and make sure it relates to your intended purpose.
- Think about where you have seen progress and where you have seen a lack of progress.
- Think about why you are choosing your story area – is it because the change pathways are particularly clear, or because the group is knowledgeable about the example?

3. Outline the main points in the narrative.

- Discuss each of the following points in your group, verifying and refining your narrative:
 - The situation before the policy influence began.
 - What is happening now (in terms of the way the policy change is being sought).
 - When the change happened.
 - Why the change happened (what you think the cause of the change was).
 - If possible, how the change happened (the factors influencing change).
 - What lessons you draw from the story.
- Remember, it is a story, so think also about your “characters”, “location”, “action”, “turning point” and “resolution”.
- The scribe should write down key points on the flipchart paper.

4. In turn, each group presents its story to the wider group.

- Other groups ask questions; ask for clarifications or more details.

What the results might look like

An example of a written, published story of change is this one by the Knowledge Sector Initiative. In 2013, the Indonesian government passed the new Village Law. The story of change describes the relative influence that research-based evidence produced by the Institute for Research and Empowerment had at critical junctions in the legislative process. Available at <http://bit.ly/1OVr5zg>.

Another example is the following story, told by the Overseas Development Institute through multimedia. It is a 10-minute video telling the story of how reformers revolutionized land rights in the Philippines. Available at <http://bit.ly/1FRyf57>.

The Think Tank Initiative (funded by William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Department for International Development) used stories of change to describe its impact on the different think tanks it supports – and the impact that those think tanks had in their different policy environments. Anyone involved in the project was invited to send a story of change. The brief was kept broad to encourage response. Sixty-five stories were received, covering a range of observations about the way the think tanks were organized, the way they worked, and the impact they had on the policy issues they were working on. Statistical analysis produced the results shown in Figures 1 and 2.

FIGURE 1
Types of change in engagement and outreach practices

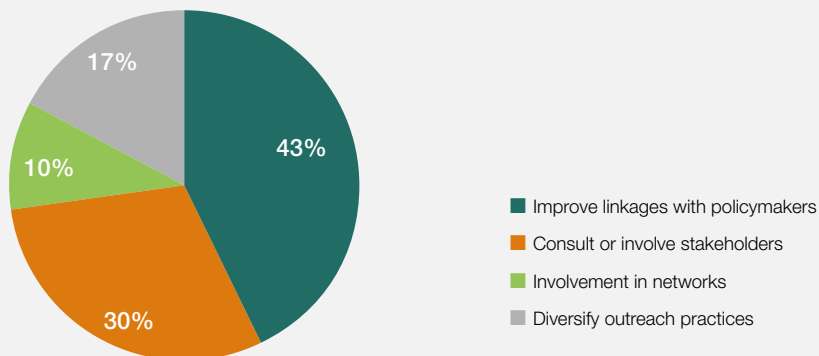
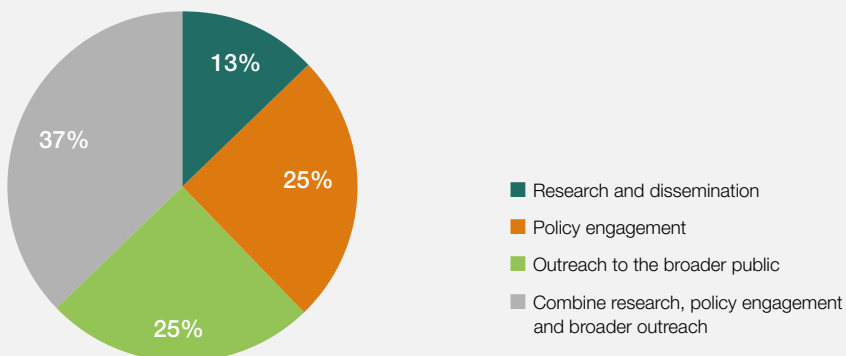


FIGURE 2
Strategies used to effect changes in policies and policy debates



Further resources

- Storytelling techniques, reasons for using storytelling in organizations and using stories of change in the media: www.stevedenning.com/Storytelling-in-the-News/default.aspx.
- Examples of storytelling in the development sector and further afield: www.sparknow.net; www.comminit.com/drum_beat_307.html; www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TED.htm; and www.edwdebono.com.
- Tools for Knowledge and Learning: A Guide for Development and Humanitarian Organisations: www.odi.org.uk/publications/153-tools-knowledge-learning-guide-development-humanitarian-organisations



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